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GOLD OR LANDS.

BY G. C. E.

"I bring not houses, lands, or gold,
To give, sweetheart, to thee;
No richer than I was of old,
Am I to-day," quoth he.
In sooth he looked his poverty,
If ever so did one;
In rags and tatters clad was he,
Bareheaded to the sun!

It was her love of long ago
Who took her outstretched hands;
"If you are he I used to know,
I seek not gold or lands.
If you but love me still, sweetheart,
I am content," cried she;
"And I will share your lowly part,
For I your bride will be!"

"Then, by my troth, my heart is thine!"
Quoth he at her reply;
"Though rags and tatters may be mine,
No beggar now am I.
I'm richer than with gold and lands
The proudest monarchs be,
With thee for mine, and these two hands
To work, sweetheart for thee!"

A FLOWER OF FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WILD WARRINGTONS," "LIKE LOST SHEEP," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.—(CONTINUED.)

I LIKED Aurora Ramage; for I respected her. The young actress and singer was honest and good, and worked hard to maintain the position she had won.

As Mrs. Ramage herself was always ready and proud to admit, "No mortal mother could possibly have been blessed with a kinder daughter" than her clever girl Aurora was in every respect to her.

Our friendly greetings over, and Mrs. Ramage having again and again expressed her delight to think that they—she and Miss de Vere—should have found us there upon the pier, we all sat down together near to the pavilion in the breezy sunlight of that perfect summer day.

The grand expanse of blue-green sea was heaving languidly under the cloudless sky. The pleasure-boats were coming home slantwise from their morning sail, with some of their "jovial crew" ill and some of them singing. The band was playing selections from Iolanthe, I remember, with the hot sunshine flooding down upon the glittering brazen instruments. Certainly there was a red-striped awning flapping over the players; but an awning like that was of little value on such a radiant day.

Then Mrs. Ramage inquired feelingly whether we had found "nice rooms," without a drawback of any kind to them, and I assured her that we had—the good soul going on to say that, she and Miss de Vere having arrived at Thangate only on the previous evening, they had taken apartments which faced the sea in the lower part of the town. The house, said Mrs. Ramage, was on the Marine and close to the Dome by the Waves.

"You see, mem," remarked Mrs. Ramage, "we must be handy to the Dome"—she called it "Doom"—"because of Rory. She has to sing there twice a day."

"I begin my engagement this afternoon," Miss de Vere put in. "Will you come and hear me, Mrs. Darkwood?"

"I should like to," I replied, not without hesitation, "if—if—— Well, do you think I may bring Isla?" I did not know how to hint what I meant; but Miss de Vere understood instantly.

"Oh, my songs are harmless enough, if you are aiming at that!" she laughed good-temperedly. "I refused flatly to sing them—it's my rule, and I break it for nobody—if they are in the least suggestive or horrid. Mr. Binkworthy, not so very long ago, thought fit to swear at me because I would not put on fleshings—tights, you know. But that's a thing I have never yet done, and I never will do, Mrs. Darkwood; and I did not speak to him for a whole week. He knows me better now," she added, with a serenity that bespoke conviction.

"I suppose you have brought down some new songs with you?" I inquired, feeling a strong and growing interest in this shrewd and sensible young woman, who went her fearless way upon a dangerous road, and who upon it, too, could hold her own without dismay.

"A few, Mrs. Darkwood," she answered pleasantly; adding that her chief ones were the best of her old London favorites, such as "Would you believe it?" and "So I hear," which, with new topical verses, smartly written up to date, would be sure to prove successful at Thangate.

I promised to visit the Dome in the afternoon.

"Thank you," said the girl simply. Then she continued, "And, if you don't care about the show, why, you can but leave it and take Isla out into the gardens at the back of the concert-hall. The wild beasts and merry-go-rounds will amuse her. Have you seen the wild beasts yet, you sweet little thing?" said Aurora, suddenly bending over and kissing the child in a thoroughly hearty and unaffected fashion.

"No," said Isla, with wide upturned eyes. "Lions and tigers!"

"Yes, both; and laughing hyenas into the bargain." Then deftly she lifted the little one on to her lap and began to describe to her all the wonderful sights that were to be seen in the gardens of the Dome by the Waves.

"But dear me, where is the Captain, mem, all this while?" cried Mrs. Ramage, just then recollecting my husband's existence.

In a few words I explained to her whither Daryl was gone; and with much concern she said immediately—

"But the poor dear gentleman will find No. 11 all shut up, Mrs. Darkwood. What will he do for a bed?"

I reminded Mrs. Ramage that London was not wholly destitute of hotels, and that my husband was a man who could well attend to his own comfort. At this she laughed, and said amiably—

"Ah, yes, indeed, gentlemen can always take care of number one—there is no doubt about that!"

And then, as the band had ceased to play and one o'clock had struck, it was time that we should be going homeward to our early dinner. Every one, in fact, was leaving the pier, with appetite sharpened for luncheon or dinner.

The Ramages accompanied me and my little girl as far as the entrance to the pier, and there we separated to go our different ways, but with the understanding that, if Isla were not tired, we should meet again at the Dome in the afternoon.

Arrived home at our lodgings on the cliff, we met our landlady, Miss Piper, in the hall.

"There's a gentleman up-stairs, madam, waiting to see you," said she. We had the drawing-room floor in Miss Piper's house—it was bigger, airier, altogether better than the down-stairs floor.

"A gentleman!" I echoed, astonished. "What is his name?"

"I do not know, madam; but he said that he was very well acquainted with you and Mr. Darkwood."

Isla had heard. She had vanished up the staircase. Her instinct was surer than mine.

I followed her wonderingly. Who could it be?

Ere I reached the landing however a little smothered cry of intense joy broke from the child. I entered the drawing-room quickly. There by the open bay-window stood Leigh Eversleigh.

Isla, speechless, was hugging his neck—she being hoisted aloft to his shoulder, clasped in the strong arms of her friend.

CHAPTER XIV.

The tide was out; the sands under the cliffs were swarming with hundreds of busy youngsters, who were building castles and digging moats around them, or hunting for shrimps in the little dykes and pools which the out-going sea had left behind it.

Isla herself was there amongst those noisy young ones, with Mr. Eversleigh—a most accomplished architect in sand and seaweed—in the role of her obedient slave.

I, with book and sun-umbrella, was occupying my favorite corner at the end of the pier, the salt life-giving wind blowing gently from the north-west and wafting shoreward the sad soft sighing cadence of the distant waves.

Mr. Eversleigh had now been at Thangate for three or four days, and was staying at the cosy "Black Stag." He shunned on principle, he said, all such monster edifices as the huge hotel on the cliff—preferring the real comfort and the capital cookery, the charming hostess and the courteous host, for all of which attractions the "Black Stag" at Thangate had acquired a wide reputation. Indeed the "Black Stag" was famous, and worthily so.

It was odd, I thought, that Mr. Eversleigh should say nothing about his going back to town, or how long he intended to remain at the "Black Stag." As for Daryl, he had not yet returned from London; nor had he once taken the trouble to write to me to account in any wise for his lengthened absence. I suppose he meant us to understand that we were to expect him when we should see him—that he would come back to us when he pleased, and not before. This was Daryl's "way"—at least, it was one of them. He had several others peculiarly his own that were equally erratic and unsatisfactory.

As I sat on the pier under my serviceable umbrella, the queer crowd trooping past like an organised procession, round and round the gay pavilion for morning exercise, the band playing, the flags adorning the pavilion roof floating out upon the wind, two strangers—young men—came along and seated themselves close to my side.

But they took no notice of—never looked at—the quiet woman reading under her umbrella; and, in fact, they continued to chat together as coolly as if she had not been there at all.

Feminine curiosity prompted me to peep forth cautiously in order to ascertain what kind of neighbors these of mine were. So I looked; and I then saw that that they were of the genus which I had heard Daryl term the "masher" breed—voice and accent revealing that they were young men of breeding too. Decidedly they were not of the ordinary herd that rushed in their thousands to Thangate. I went on reading.

In another moment or two I had wholly forgotten that I was not alone in my favorite corner. But presently, the name of Miss de Vere falling distinctly on my ear that was nearest to this pair of male loungers, I caught myself involuntarily listening to the talk that was going on between them.

"Look here, old chappie," one of them was saying very quietly and kindly—"I don't think I altogether—er—approve, don't you know, of your 'Aurora-ing' Miss de Vere quite so freely now. It makes a lot of difference when a fellow's in earnest and as good as engaged to a girl, don't you know? It makes a lot of difference then?"

And his companion, with a more perceptible drawl, answered—

"In earnest, Tracy—surely you are not in earnest! But, if so, old man, of course she shall be Miss de Vere for the future."

"You'll see, Galveston," said the first speaker, dropping his glass from his eye. "I don't much fancy—or—that I should have followed her down here if—er—if I had not been in earnest—head over heels in earnest—eh?"

The other laughed.

"By Jove," he said, "what a deuce of a row there'll be at Starch when the gov'nor hears of it!"

"I dare say," replied the one called Tracy serenely. "But it won't be the first, dear fellow, by a good many that I've been compelled to have out with the old man at home. It does him good, I believe—wakes him up, don't you know!"

"Can he disinherit you, old chappie—I forgot—or otherwise in that direction make himself obnoxious?"

"Fortunately he can't, or I have not the least doubt in the world he would have done it long ago."

The other laughed again. I noticed that he usually laughed before he spoke.

"The Countess will have a fit," he drawled.

"Not she—she's too tough. You don't know how tough my mother is. She'll storm, of course; but storms don't last for ever. They blow over in time."

"And Lady Cassandra, old man—how about her?"

Tracy yawned—a long yawn with something like a groan at the end of it.

"Oh, Lady Cassandra be——" He recollected himself—for the first time perceived also that a woman was in close proximity to—indeed was brushing—his dandy legs. "Oh, Lady Cassandra be jiggered!" he supplemented mildly.

The next remark that fell upon my ears caused me to start visibly; but these young men did not notice it. Never for a moment did it occur to them that I was interested in what they were saying. My book nearly slipped from my hand. I was listening voluntarily now—listening intently—scarcely breathing, lest a syllable of the strange talk should escape me.

"By-the-by," said he of the irritating drawl, "Daryl Darkwood, so I'm told, has lately been seen here at Thangate—at Thangate, of all places in creation! I wonder where he has been hiding for these five or six years or more. Abroad, I fancy—perhaps the best place for him."

"Undoubtedly," replied the one called Tracy. "Your brother Rollo was at Cambridge with him; wasn't he?"

"Yes. He and Darkwood and Leigh Eversleigh were all three of 'em at Ursula's together. I never knew much of Daryl Darkwood myself. He's older than I am. What I heard of him came from Rollo."

"A rather loose fish, wasn't he?" said Tracy pleasantly.

"Who—Darkwood? Rather! And he made such a mess of it at last—ended so deuced badly—one couldn't help feeling sorry for him, poor chap! They said—Rollo or somebody said—that he turned painter; married and turned painter, you know. He always, so I've heard, had a taste in that direction. I have seen some of the sketches he gave to Rollo—really awfully clever some of 'em; and—and, well, as I say, he went abroad presently, and we lost sight of him. Where he went Heaven knows!"

"Did his wife go with him?"

"I suppose so. But who she was, or where the dickens he picked her up—whether she was pretty or whether she was plain, or whether she was at all acquainted with the true character of the husband she'd got hold of—all this is unknown to me, and I believe to everybody else. The whole thing was a mystery."

"And Redknights, Marc," said Tracy lazily—"how about Redknights, then?"

"Oh, Darkwood, of course, never went there again—has never been there since! After the scandal, the frightful row they had—and I suppose the poor beggar deserved it—the old Squire kicked him out—disowned him—swore he'd done with him forever. It was a most miserable business, no doubt."

"But what I mean is," said the admirer of Miss de Vere, "how about the entail at Redknights?"

"Why, there is none," was the reply. "Old Darkwood, in that way, can do exactly as he pleases. He can leave every penny of his money, house and all, to the County Hospital if he likes. And 'pon my word I shouldn't wonder if he did it. He is quite in his dotage now, so they say, and acknowledges no kinship whatever, save that of his daughter, Mrs. Eversleigh, who lives with him. And she's a great invalid—had a lot o' trouble in her time."

"Well, 'tis lucky for me," observed Tracy lightly, "that the old man at Starch is not possessed of the same power—that's all I can say—or it would be all the worse in the end for me and Aurora."

The other laughed out loud and long, as if the domestic tempest ahead of his friend was the greatest joke imaginable for a looker-on.

"Deucedly lucky indeed for you, old chappie," he drawled at last. "As some illustrious poet says somewhere or other, 'best for you and best for Miss Aurora de Vere——'"

"Hush man," suddenly interrupted Tracy; "here they come—she and her mother."

I had overheard enough. I was scarcely, as may be conceived, in humor to be recognized by Mrs. Ramage and Aurora, particularly after all that I had just heard.

An agreeable state of things it would be for every one concerned if Missde Vere marched up in her cordial fashion and insisted forthwith upon introducing me to the young man called Tracy, and to the friend with him!

Both then, to their consternation and confusion, would learn that they had all the while been sitting close to Daryl Darkwood's wife! The thought to me was dreadful.

I rose swiftly and noiselessly, my large sunshade lowered well over my head and shoulders, and walked away in a direction opposite to that from which I was somehow conscious that Mrs. Ramage and her daughter were approaching.

I was soon lost in the promenading crowd.

My emotions just then were of a conflicting nature. I felt keenly hurt, humiliated and angry—curiously lonely, all at once, in the midst of so many people.

My bosom ached with its sense of pain and bitterness; I believe that hot and passionate tears were rising thick in my eyes; I know that I could hardly see whither my steps were leading me.

Although I had never—never from the first—been in my husband's confidence, in some vague manner it galled me to reflect that strangers and outsiders—the cold and careless world generally—should know more of the man I had married than I myself knew.

Indeed, the world, it appeared, knew all, whilst I knew naught. What right had he to keep me in the dark—to enlighten me, his wife, in no wise?

What right had he to marry me in secret, under cruelly false colors; and, if he was in truth the reprobate that these men seemed to hint, what right had he to drag me down to his——

Then the recollection of my grievous parentage, of my own sad past, rushed, as it were, headlong upon me, bringing with it, as it ever did, a hot wave of shame and horror which seemed to flow over me, to burn me from head to foot; and in a kind of dim sorrowful way I realized that I should rightly be grateful to, and not wroth with, my husband, Daryl Darkwood, for after all I owed him much.

If, on the one hand, he had seen fit to keep his shameful past a secret from me—from me who should have been the participant of all his secrets, if these were any—had not he, on the other, given to me a name, a name that could be mine so long as I lived, a name lawful alike in the eyes of Heaven and of man, and forever taken me from the evil shelter that I had from my earliest years been taught to call my "home?"

Moreover, he was Isla's father. No, no; I could not, dared not now reproach him for aught he had done; for who, alas, was I that I should presume to pry into, to sit in judgment upon, the past of the man who, at any rate, whatever his offences, had been unselfish enough to make me his wife?

Throughout our married life I had never reproached him for his unnatural reticence; I would not begin to reproach him now. Knowing Daryl's temper, I would be wise; I would be as cautious and forbearing with him as I had ever been. So I then resolved.

All the same, I was unhappy, dissatisfied, ill at ease—perhaps because deep in my heart I was conscious that, had I now loved Daryl as dearly and as truly as I had loved him in the old dead days, my misery of that morning, the galling sense of injustice and wrong, would have been infinitely greater than it was—infinitely harder to endure.

Was it any fault of mine that my once strong love for him had decayed and grown poor? Well, Heaven above me knew the truth though man might never know it.

I had passed the iron turnstiles which cut off the broader and more popular part of the pier from the longer and narrower part which touched the town, when I walked blindly against some one who was hurrying towards the iron barriers.

"Really, I beg your pardon," I was beginning. The next instant I saw that formal apology was needless. It was Leigh Eversleigh.

"I was on my way to look for you, Mrs. Darkwood," he explained, laughing, whilst I, unseen, managed to brush the tears from my eyelashes, and to call up a smile to my set lips.

"The sunlight was in my eyes," I said at random. Then, marking that the child was absent, I cried anxiously, "Isla—where is she?"

"It all right—she is perfectly safe," he answered. "We have had an uncommonly industrious morning on the sands, and it was warm work into the bargain; and by-and-by the little one got tired, and wanted me to take her home."

"And you did?"

"Yes; I carried her home and laid her in her cot, and, at her earnest request, began to tell her stories; but in five minutes she was asleep as sound as a roach, and looking as well and as rosy as you could wish to see her. I am so glad that you brought her to Thangate."

"So am I." In the next breath, "how good and kind you are to her, Mr. Eversleigh," I added gratefully.

He stooped and said to me rather abruptly—

"Have you—forgive me—heard some bad news?"

"Why do you ask?" I inquired in a faint voice.

"You are looking so—so pale and sad," said he very kindly, flushing somewhat through his tan as he spoke; "though I fear you will think me impertinent for remarking it."

If there was one man in the whole world whom I felt I could trust before all other living men, that man was Leigh Eversleigh.

"If," I said more firmly, "you will walk homeward with me, I will tell you what I have heard this morning."

He turned directly, his head slightly bent, his hands and stick behind his back. So he walked by my side towards the town.

Then I, without further parley, and reserving nothing, told him all that I had by chance overheard, not half an hour before, in the desultory conversation of those two young men.

For some seconds he offered no comment, then he said slowly—

"That must be Viscount Tracy, the only son of the Earl of Starch; and his companion doubtless was Marc Gaveston, Rollo Gaveston's younger brother."

"And is it possible that Lord Tracy is going to marry Aurora Ramage—Miss de Vere?" I exclaimed.

"Actually it seems like it," smiled Leigh. "I heard in town, a short while back, that he was partly engaged to some handsome young woman who was on the stage; but I had not the least idea that the lady so favored would prove to be your Miss de Vere."

"Will it not be considered a—a—a very extraordinary occurrence, Mr. Eversleigh?" I inquired, amused and amazed at the same time.

"Well, hardly. Lord Tracy will be by no means the first of his rank who has chosen a wife from the same quarter Whether such ventures as a rule turn out well is quite another question."

"It is a queer world, Mr. Eversleigh!" said I, sighing unawares.

"Can it be that you have only just mastered the fact, Mrs. Darkwood?" returned he, with a swift and somewhat puzzled downward glance at me.

"No. I found it out years ago."

I had spoken more passionately perhaps—with more bitterness, I am certain—than I had meant to speak; so I hastened to cover what I felt to be an error by saying hastily, before Leigh himself could speak—

"And do you know—personally I mean—this young Viscount Tracy?"

"I have met him once or twice—it may be oftener—at the Gavestons'. As you heard, Rollo Gaveston and I and Daryl Darkwood were all three of us together as quite young men at Ursula's."

"And the Mrs. Eversleigh mentioned this morning by Mr. Marc Gaveston," I ventured to ask—"who is she? You, Mr. Eversleigh, I know, have no mother. You have told me so yourself," I added gently.

"Ah, you mean the Mrs. Eversleigh at Redknights?" said Leigh, in his frank way.

"Yes—at—at Redknights," said I, in a rather husky and uncertain tone.

"Well," Leigh tried to explain, "she is in reality no kinswoman whatever of mine; for I and her late husband, Captain Eversleigh, were merely cousins two or three times removed—I positively cannot tell you which, for I am not, you see, sure myself," he laughed. "However, I know Mrs. Eversleigh intimately; for besides our being just slightly connected through her marriage with Captain Eversleigh, I used frequently to meet her, in the days before she became a confirmed invalid, at Gaveston Priory—a fine old place, and only a few miles from Redknights itself. But it strikes me, Mrs. Darkwood," said he pleasantly, "that somehow you have never thoroughly understood the Eversleigh-Darkwood connection. Have you?"

"It would be odd," I replied, trying to speak without pain, "if I did. You are aware—you must have seen for yourself—how little I know of Daryl's affairs—how little I am in my husband's confidence."

"But surely," cried Leigh, as if involuntarily, "you have heard of Redknights?"

And I answered as calmly as I possibly could—

"I never heard of Redknights until this morning!"

CHAPTER XV.

IF THE reply touching my ignorance upon the subject of Redknights and its history created any astonishment in the mind of Leigh Eversleigh, he allowed naught of the surprise to escape him.

"Well, Mrs. Darkwood," he said with a rather suspicious cheeriness and rapidity of utterance, "Daryl, I think, could not possibly object to my making a slight family complication somewhat clearer to you than it is at present, because I notice that in your hearing he sometimes—though perhaps it is in jest—speaks of me as his cousin—which of course I am not. It is misleading, you know, and there's no secret in the matter—there cannot be. Besides," added he, with that sunny smile of his own which could be so singularly winning when he chose, "I consider that it is as much my family story as it is Daryl's. You see, it was in this wise. Old Squire Darkwood, who is himself still alive, had two children—a son and a daughter—Marion, who became Mrs. Eversleigh, and Daryl—Daryl's father, who, together with his wife and Captain Eversleigh, fell a victim to an outbreak of some terrible fever in India. All three of them were out there, as it happened, at the same time, the separate regiments of the two Captains being stationed only a few miles apart from each other; and all three of them were carried off by the epidemic, with many another European, within the space of a few days. The news for the old Squire at Redknights—who, by the way, had lost his own wife in the earlier years of their married life—was a great blow; people said, indeed, that it aged him prematurely. Fortunately for Mrs. Eversleigh herself, whose health just then was delicate, she had been unable—like Mrs. Darkwood, the other Captain's wife—to accompany her husband out to the Indian station. The Darkwoods had taken their boy with them; but Marion Eversleigh and her little daughter remained behind in England with her father at Redknights. But Fate, it seemed, was to be strangely cruel to the Darkwood family. Scarcely had the sad tidings arrived from India, telling the old Squire that his only son Daryl, his son-in-law Captain Eversleigh, and his daughter-in-law, Daryl's wife, were no more, and that Captain Darkwood's boy, now a youngster of eight or nine and his grandfather's heir, was about to be sent home to England by friends of his dead parents—scarcely, I say, had this sorrowful intelligence reached Redknights when a fresh and crushing calamity fell upon the newly-widowed Mrs. Eversleigh. Her only child, the darling of its mother's heart, and the pet of its grandfather's, too—met with a tragic end. The little Flower, when only about two and a half years old——"

"Flower—Flower!" I interrupted him, keenly interested. "Was, then, the child of this Mrs. Eversleigh—who, I perceive, must be Daryl's aunt—called Flower?"

"Yes," replied Leigh gravely. "Her name, sweet as it is singular, was the same as yours, Mrs. Darkwood. Often since I have known you have I thought what an extraordinary circumstance it is that Daryl's wife should be called Flower."

"Surely," said I musingly, "the child you speak of must have been the little cousin whom Daryl has once or twice mentioned in a casual manner. Ah, I remember now!"

"Yes. But Daryl Darkwood, now your husband, never in his life saw her, though," put in Leigh gently. "For, as children, they had never met before he was taken out to India; and before he returned from that treacherous country little Flower Eversleigh was dead. She had been killed, the tragedy was over—Daryl knows it only by hearsay—by the time he came to live with his grandfather at Redknights."

"Killed!" I echoed. "How dreadful, Mr. Eversleigh! How was she killed?" My voice sank to an almost awe-stricken whisper; my blood, as the saying goes, ran cold.

I was thinking of my own darling, my little Isla, with her soft short dark curls and her wistful blue, her intensely blue and dark-lashed eyes—"Periwinke the Second," as Daryl sometimes in his boisterous moods called her; and I wondered, with a dull sense of unspeakable anguish, how I should be able to go on living, as this other mother, it appeared, had gone on living, and was living still, if my child were thus to be snatched violently from me.

"Yes," quietly continued Leigh; "poor little Flower Eversleigh was murdered—murdered, for the sake of revenge, by a vindictive woman-servant who had for insolence been dismissed from service at Redknights. She was Mrs. Eversleigh's abigail; and was called, if I remember rightly, Rachel Owen. She had an accomplice, though I forget his name, in his fiendish deed, but I know that he was the lover of the woman Owen, and an underkeeper or something on the Squire's estate. It was a most cruel thing—they being well aware how dear was the little one in the sight of the old man and his daughter—and caused, so I've been told, in those days great stir and excitement through Buckinghamshire."

"Is—is Redknight then in Buckinghamshire?"

"Yes."

"But those—those wretches, Mr. Eversleigh—you have not yet told me how they murdered the child?"

"They drowned her," he answered. "Winding through a hollow or valley in the park of the old house there is a deep and swift-flowing river, with many a muddy and weedy hole hidden away in the dangerous bed of it. This deep swift stream, Mrs. Darkwood, was that child's grave."

"And the murderers—the man and the woman," I said indignantly—"they were of course caught and properly punished for the crime——" I stopped, turning, as I invariably did when bloodshed and the hideous consequence of it were dominant in my thoughts, suddenly faint and sick.

"Well," Mr. Eversleigh said more blithely, "the really most extraordinary part of the story is that, although every effort was made at the time to track the man and the woman to their hiding-place all endeavor towards this righteous end failed utterly. But by-and-by the rumor got abroad—yet no one in the Darkwood family to this day, I believe, is quite certain whether or not the report was correct—that justice, in a singularly complete manner, had overtaken Rachel Owen and her infamous companion in guilt. As man and wife, and under an assumed name, it was said that they had fled to and hidden themselves in some north-eastern locality of London. Here it came about that, in a deadly brawl between this worthy couple, Rachel Owen was slain by her brute-lover—kicked and beaten to death by this man, whose name I cannot just now remember. However, the end of the affair was, be

sullenly making no attempt to escape, was taken red-handed—tried, condemned to death, and speedily——"

I wished to hear no more. It was all too horrible. Warm as was the day, I shivered. We were ascending the higher part of the town on our way to my lodgings upon the cliff; and here I was thankful for an excuse to ask for some real support.

"Do not tell me any more of it," I said, with difficulty controlling my faint voice—"the story is so—so dismal. It is dreadful; and—and I—— Mr. Eversleigh, will you be good enough to lend me your arm just here—merely for a moment? I always fancy that this part of the ascent, especially on a warm day, is most fatiguing."

"It is," he assented readily, the assistance I had asked for being instantly forthcoming. "The heat has not made you feel ill, I trust, Mrs. Darkwood?" he added anxiously.

"No, no! I am rather tired—indeed that is all."

We had gained the summit of the heights. The sea-wind met us afresh. I drew in a deep draught of it, and felt stronger. But I was determined that the talk should not drift back to the gloomy theme of murder and sudden death—I had had enough of it; it tried me too sorely.

"Now that I have the chance—that the opportunity is here," so I made haste to say—"I should very much like to—to put a certain question to you, Mr. Eversleigh. I wonder whether you will answer it?"

"I will if I can," he replied gravely, after a pause. My hand still rested upon his arm.

"I am sure that you can; but I am not sure that you will."

"Let me hear it," said he.

"This is the second time to-day—the second time within the part hour—that I have made to you the humiliating confession that, although I am Daryl Darkwood's wife, I know almost absolutely nothing of his affairs—certainly nothing of his past," observed I.

Leigh, an honest gentleman, was silent. He knew that I spoke only what was true. Therefore I went on—

"It is painfully clear to me that there is a secret in Daryl's life. It is equally clear to me that from his own lips I shall never hear what that secret is. If hitherto I have been fool enough to doubt that this was actually so, young Viscount Tracy and his friend this morning dispelled all uncertainty upon the matter. From their conversation the truth was forced upon me—there is a dark chapter in Daryl Darkwood's life."

Still Leigh was silent. So I continued more nervously—

"Of course I, as Daryl's wife, cannot stoop to ask you, Mr. Eversleigh, to lift the veil, to let in the light upon the gloom, as it were; equally as a matter of course, as Daryl's friend, you could not do so mean a thing even were I so far to forget myself as to beseech you at this moment to do it. But—but this I do freely own I should like to know—I think that I have a right to know it—was the offence, this trespass of Daryl Darkwood's, a very great, a very heinous one? That is my question; and, do you know, I am rather hopeful about it? It cannot be very bad, can it," said I wistfully, if somewhat vaguely, "or—or you, Mr. Eversleigh, would not be his kind friend?"

He was staring at the ground as he walked. He seemed to be pondering something before he could make up his mind to speak.

"Will you tell me," I begged earnestly, "so much, if nothing more? Indeed I ask you for nothing more. Do tell me, Mr. Eversleigh, that it was not anything very—very terrible—at any rate, that it was nothing wholly unpardonable?"

At last he said, with great kindness of manner—

"You see, it is not fair, not just, that a man should suffer forever for a—a fault once committed and past undoing. He sins, let us say, and suffers for that sin. But surely, though reparation, atonement, may not altogether lie within his power, after much suffering and sincere repentance on account of the transgression, he should be forgiven, and his fault be forgotten? That is only just."

I was far from satisfied. I was disappointed and uneasy—the truth of the case being that I somehow could not bring myself to conceive that Daryl had ever really suffered, much less repented.

One could not in fancy associate penitence and humility with the reckless, not to say selfish spirit, of Daryl Darkwood. They are qualities of a divine stamp, and are impossible to the natures of some people.

According to Daryl himself, he was never to blame for anything. It was always his "infernal luck," his "destiny," that was answerable for the mischief that ever happened.

I sighed and said—

"Yet, in spite of all, whatever the 'all' may be, you are, are you not, his real, his sincere friend?"

We were close to Miss Piper's door; there was no time for more; and after to-day, the question, I felt, could never be unearthed again.

And Leigh, as gently and as kindly as before replied—

"I can truthfully say, Mrs. Darkwood, that I believe I am his sincere friend—and yours."

"Ah, I know well enough that you are mine!" I answered gratefully, albeit perhaps a trifle sadly.

Was I hurt, I wonder, because he had not been more frank with me? I did not know.

There was some one standing within the open doorway of Miss Piper's house, smoking a cigar that made the air around delightful. At first I thought it was one of the lodgers who occupied the dining-room floor below us, and did not recognize him; for he, the strange man, as I thought, was dressed in a new summer suit of very light gray and a woolly-looking tweed, admirably fashioned and vastly becoming to the tall, dark, handsome stranger who wore it.

His hat, a deerstalker, matched the gray suit in just the right way; his tie was a knot of dusky crimson silk caught in a gold ring; and his boots were of new patent leather topped with light colored cloth.

A black walking stick, with a silver knob, and a white Bond Street buttonhole, finished off the gentleman's whole attire.

"Like a good and dutiful dame, Periwinkle," he called out, with an unpleasant light in his brilliant eyes, and an offensive smile just visible beneath his heavy swart moustache, "I perceive that you look inconsolable for the absence of your true knight and master."

Suddenly, as if it had been burnt, my hand dropped from Leigh Eversleigh's arm. I had totally forgotten that it remained there.

Leigh, in his easy, thorough-bred manner, raised his hat to the man on the doorstep, for it was his friend, and my husband, Daryl Darkwood.

Notwithstanding his strange mien and his curious smile in greeting me and Mr. Eversleigh, Daryl clapped Leigh upon the shoulder in the heartiest way possible, and invited him into "luncheon."

But Mr. Eversleigh, though he came upstairs for a few minutes' chat, flatly declined to stay for our mid-day meal.

He was going to drive over to Shipgate, he said, to call upon some people he knew, who had taken a house there for the autumn, and he must get back to the "Black Stag" at once.

A mutual explanation took place between the two men, whilst I went to see whether Isla was yet awake, to take off my hat, and to smooth my hair. The Thangate breezes of a morning were apt to wax rough in their play.

Leigh Eversleigh explained to Daryl what I naturally already knew—how it was that he, Leigh himself, had turned up so unexpectedly at Thangate.

The father of his yachting friend had died suddenly in Scotland; the son in great haste had been telegraphed for; the yachting party and their plans were of course broken up in consequence, and the whole scheme had been abandoned—postponed indefinitely until a happier time.

Having made his arrangements with this cruise in view, and really looking forward to what would be his first glimpse of the Mediterranean, Leigh declared that he had been at a loss to decide what to be at, or whether to go for his autumn holiday, when this sudden upsetting of their plans was brought about by the death in Scotland.

Recollecting however that we were at Thangate, and having our address in his possession, he thought that he could not do better than run down to the seaside, and in person ascertain how we were getting along.

So he came and took rooms at the "Black Stag," and indeed was so comfortable at that famous hostelry, that he had no intention just yet of going away from that place.

"Well, as for me," threw in Daryl, carelessly, "I merely went up to town for the day, as I thought. But, strolling along the Strand, whom should I run against but that queer fish Herr von Rosenberg. Why, you must remember Rosenberg, Periwinkle, don't you?" turning rather sharply to me. Isla was still resting in her cot, and I had returned to the sitting-room.

"Yes," I replied briefly. Distinctly I remembered Herr von Rosenberg, but could remember nothing good of him.

"I wonder how it is," pursued Daryl, in a voice of affected plaintiveness, "that so many foreigners invade our shores—come over to 'do' the English capital—at such an impossible time of the year?"

"Oh it's only those who don't know any better," said Leigh.

"Suppose that is it," agreed Daryl languidly. "And it's so deuced hard to make 'em comprehend, don't you know, that London in mid-August isn't exactly the same thing as London in May."

"Did you stop then, Darkwood, with this Herr von Rosenberg?" Mr. Eversleigh inquired.

"Yes, replied Daryl, sinking into the easiest chair the room contained, and stretching apart his long legs in that remarkably cool and favorite fashion of his. "He said he felt lonely and wanted somebody. And so, as he was snugly housed at Clagg's, I saw no reason why——"

"What—in Brook street?" put in Leigh, in accents of quiet astonishment.

"Yes; Brook street," said Daryl, nodding indolently at his friend. "Rosenberg, in one respect, you see, old man, is unlike the generality of his needy brethren of the Vaterland. He has a nice little property of his own somewhere or other in the Saxon Switzerland region, and he is as free as an Australian millionaire with the coin it brings him in. Not half a bad chap, Eversleigh, for a German. Should like, by the by, to introduce you."

"Thanks," was all Leigh said. But the single word was spoken with perfect kindliness and might mean anything.

"Come, old fellow," cried my husband, rousing himself, "if you are so confoundedly obstinate and won't stop, you'll have a sherry-and-bitters, or something, before you go? Now, Periwinkle, my dear, look alive! Your notions of hospitality are prodigious."

The becoming gray suit and the rest of my husband's handsome make-up were now accounted for to me. For this was the plain fact—Herr von Rosenberg was a confirmed gamester; but even in those days when we had known him in Dresden and elsewhere, he had never in that direction been a match for Daryl Darkwood.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SMUGGLING GOODS.—The curious tricks to which people resort who deal in contraband goods shows a zeal and ingenuity worthy of a better cause. One dealer in costly lace used to run in a valuable lot through the gates of Paris, under the very feet and eyes of the officials, on the back of a little dog, who had another coat neatly fitted all over his back, which he wore with as much grace as his own hairy jacket. The lace was wound smoothly and evenly about his body, and he could carry hundreds of dollars worth in this way, and nobody be the wiser. He was a sharp little fellow, and when baffled at one gate, would run off to another, slipping in under the very hoofs of the horses as a carriage rolled along. The trick was at last suspected, and the wary dog, rather than suffer himself to be caught, took to the water, and was shot. He had a costly winding sheet of lace about him, when he came to be examined. Such a faithful dog ought to have had a better master.

There is a museum of these confiscated articles at Paris, which is now and then visited by the curiosity hunter, where is a pile of coals, with a spool of sewing thread in each chunk; boots with French watches hid in the heels; a coffin which is filled with cigars; a huge stuffed boa-constrictor, a rent in whose sides disclosed a precious assignment of valuable laces; a huge African hangs by his neck in a very ghastly fashion, but a stroke of the cane shows him to be only a sounding tin. He used to figure on the footboard of a carriage as an attendant, and drove in and out many times through the gates of Paris. But one time, in a jam, when everybody was scolding and swearing and trying to get on, an officer present harangued the crowd of drivers and told them to take an example of equanimity from this black, who looked on so serenely amidst the tumult. Slapping the good fellow approvingly on the shoulder, he was surprised to hear him give a very metallic rattle. He was taken off to the inspection room, and found to be filled with excellent brandy, which was drawn off at the tee. They soon sampled an "armful" of the fluid, and the poor black's day of service was over.

If you want to succeed in life, be thorough in your work, whatever it is.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE BEST WAY.—On a fall of snow in Vienna, Germany, the town-crier rouses the people with his bell, and crowds of men, and even women and boys, are ready at once to give a hand to the work of clearing away. The local authorities of course pay proper remuneration, and the public are inconvenienced only for a few hours.

MEXICO'S SOAP MONEY.—Mexican coins and moneys afford an interesting study. Some of the money used is mere pasteboard stamped. Silver coins are split into several pieces to make fractional currency. A certain numismatist says that when he was in Mexico he found in some places pieces of hard soap bearing the Government stamp, and circulating as money.

AT FIRST.—It is said that the frozen Norwegians, on the first sight of roses dared not touch what they conceived were trees budding with fire: and the natives of Virginia, the first time they seized on a quantity of gunpowder, which belonged to the English colony, sowed it for grain, expecting to reap a plentiful crop of combustion by the next harvest, to blow away the whole colony.

WATER-FOLK.—In Japan hundreds of men and women spend their lives and bring up their children upon the water, and know nothing of the land, except as they make an occasionly visit to it when obliged to purchase supplies or attend to some unusual business. In all the bays along the coast are found thousands of small craft called "junks." These are small flat-bottomed boats which are owned and inhabited by a man and his family just as houses are in other parts of the world. The owners' business is the transportation of merchandise of all kinds, and their navigation is a sort of family affair.

DEER.—Where there are few deer, a big stag is generally accompanied by a small one, who acts as his slave. The duties of the latter are to watch on a hillock while his master lies in a snug hole out of the wind, and to go in front when there is some prospect of danger. Any negligence is quickly punished by the horns or fore-feet of his lord. One day a noble huntsman severely wounded a good stag, when another fine stag galloped back to keep him company in his misfortune. A bullet finished the wounded beast, but still the devoted friend kept close by and would not leave the spot. His lordship had not the heart to shoot the poor beast after he had given proof of such wonderful fidelity, and at last had almost to drive him away.

SANDPAPER.—Sandpaper is at present made with powdered glass instead of sand. Glass is readily pulverized by heating it red hot and throwing it into water, and finishing the powdering in an iron mortar. By the use of sieves of different sizes of mesh the powder can be separated into various grades, from the finest dust to the very coarse; and these should be kept separate. A strong paper is tacked down and covered with a strong size of glue, and the surface covered with powdered glass of the desired fineness. When the glue is dry, the surplus glass is shaken or brushed off. Muslin is better than paper, and lasts much longer in use.

GAMBLING.—"Dice" and that pugnacious bird the "cock," are the chief instruments employed by the numerous nations of the East to agitate their minds and ruin their fortunes; to which the Chinese, who are desperate gamesters, add the use of cards. When all other property is played away, the Asiatic gambler scruples not to stake his wife or his child, on the cast of a die, or courage and strength of a martial bird. If still unsuccessful, the last venture he stakes is himself. In the island of Ceylon, cock-fighting is carried to a great height. The Sumatrans are addicted to the use of dice. A strong spirit of play characterizes a Malayan. After having resigned everything to the good fortune of the winner, he is reduced to a horrid state of desperation; he then loosens a certain lock of hair, which indicates war and destruction to all the raving gamester meets. He intoxicates himself with opium; and working himself up into a fit of frenzy, he bites and kills every one who comes in his way. But as soon as this lock is seen flowing it is lawful to fire at the person, and to destroy him as fast as possible.

A COBBLER at Leyden, who used to attend the public disputation held at the Academy, was asked if he understood Latin. "No," replied the mechanic, "but I know who is wrong in the argument." "How?", asked his friend. "Why, by seeing who is angry first!"

HAND IN HAND.

BY E. F.

Brief was the rosy dream
When you and I,
Slow drifted down the stream
Of Destiny.

Pale gleams a wintry moon
Around the spot.
Can summer fade so soon,
Love be forgot?

Nought but its shadow stay
In memory,
So marring day by day
Life's harmony?

Or shall love sleeping lone
At last awake,
And passion prove too strong
Old ties to break?

Tears that have dimm'd the sight
In troublous past,
Be banish'd in the light
Of joy at last?

Shining in radiance sweet
Athwart the land,
Where Love and I shall meet
Hand clasp'd in hand?

LIGHT AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

"WHAT is it, miss?" cried the maid gently.

"Stop them! Oh, Mary, let me see them, if only for one moment! My sisters have all been here, I know, for I caught sight of them going away! And I have not even been told of their visit! I must kiss them once again before I die!"

"It's that cruel doctor then!" said Mary, bursting into tears. "'Tis he wouldn't let them come in, you may depend on it, my dear miss. Oh, you won't say what I've told you, will you now?" she added, terrified at what she had let slip.

"Can you not stop my sisters for five minutes, Mary?" implored Mabel, seizing the girl's hand. "Bring them under my window, if I may not go outside these prison walls! Do that for me, and I will take care you shall be rewarded for your kindness."

But Mary never moved. She knew it was impossible to do what the poor young lady entreated.

"I'd do that and a deal more if I dared, or if it was the least use," replied Mary, with a sigh; "but the doctor would only turn me away—he's so very sharp. The dear young ladies went away crying, but he wouldn't let them come in."

"My sisters?" said Mabel, almost heart-broken.

"Yes, miss. There was three of them—sweet, pretty young ladies—though not beauties like you, my dear miss, if you'll pardon the liberty I'm taking in saying so."

"Mary, Mary, I shall die without seeing them!" sobbed Mabel.

"I hope not, miss," replied the girl, distressed. "They said they'd come soon again."

"But they will be turned away! Oh, if we could speak to each other only for five minutes!" exclaimed Mabel, in anguish.

In vain her attendant tried to cheer her.

Mabel resumed her seat by the window, and only shook her head when Mrs. Feathers came in, begging that she would "please to go down to luncheon."

"I couldn't eat," answered Mabel sadly, turning away her head.

"Try, my dear miss," said Mrs. Feathers coaxingly. "There's such a beautiful fowl, and grapes that the doctor brought out of his own houses!"

"Let him bring my sisters to me, or let me go to them. Why does he keep them from me?" burst from the unhappy girl's lips. "Were they alone, Mary?" she asked, when Mrs. Feathers had left the room. "Who came with them? My brother?"

"No, miss. Your papa came; and he was turned back too. The poor dear gentleman seemed quite dejected."

"My father, did he come? And yet he was not admitted! Oh, Mary, I cannot understand it," gasped Mabel.

"Nor I neither, miss. How can it hurt you to see your own papa and your sisters? It would be a deal better to let you have a good talk to them, instead of fretting you like this. But them doctors will have their own way."

Mabel remained stupefied. What was the mysterious power exercised over them all by her uncle?

How was it he had prevented Caroline, Netta, and Bella from exchanging a word with her, after their journey made expressly to see her?

Above all, how was it that her father had not been admitted? But was this latter a ruse too? Perhaps.

One thing however was clear, she was a prisoner, and her own relatives had been made to believe that she was insane.

A shudder shook her whole frame; again she lapsed into silence, and remained speechless by the window, gazing out at the autumn sky, over which dark clouds were flying.

A vision came to her of her old home, of her happy girlhood, and of Dick's bright affection—of one far dearer even than Dick, whose loving voice entreated, "Be mine, beloved!"

Was it all to end like this? She hardly heard the opening of her door, or noticed Mary re-enter.

"You've sat there all day long, miss," said the maid pityingly. "Won't you come downstairs and have a cup of tea? It looks cheerful in the drawing-room, and it would be a change for you."

Mabel turned her head without speaking—she had heard the words, but did not take in their meaning. And then entered Mrs. Feathers.

"You've not been out all day, miss; and the doctor's orders and your papa's were particular about your getting fresh air. See—I've brought your cloak! Just take a turn in the garden before it gets dark, and then you'll be able to eat something—do now, miss."

Mabel was too sad to resist. She permitted the housekeeper to throw the cloak around her, and soon, with Mary by her side, she was pacing the garden walk at the back of the house.

In front of the dining-room windows a young gardener was about to wheel away his tools and barrow.

He had been mowing the lawn, which had been untidy for two or three days.

"Mr. Fox, the gardener, has got rheumatism," remarked Mary, by way of saying something to her companion; "so he has sent this nice young fellow to mow the lawn and tidy up a bit. You didn't notice him, did you, miss?"

"No, Mary," answered Mabel, utterly indifferent.

"Dear, how chill the wind is to-night," remarked Mary, in a vain effort to draw her companion out of her sad musing. "And the sunset is coming on quite fine—look at the streaks of gold and crimson."

But Mabel gazed languidly at the sky only for a moment, and then cast her eyes sadly on the greensward.

"I think we will go in now," she said a moment or two later; and she led the way to the house.

In so doing she passed close to the young gardener, who was putting away his tools. He touched his hat to Mabel, but, as she did not look up, she was unaware of this attention.

Mary however smiled and bade the young fellow good night. He was quick to return her greeting and to say a pleasant word in passing.

"I say," he said, hastening to Mary's side, as her mistress disappeared into the house, "won't you speak a word to me? We're fellow-servants, as one may say, and I'm not at all sure that I don't know your sweetheart!"

"Bill Darby?" asked Mary, stopping short, whilst a flush of pleasure suffused her face. "Well I never."

"There's many a stranger thing than that," continued the young man, who had agreed to do Fox's work till the latter's rheumatism was better. "I've been watching you ever so long as you walked up and down. Can't you come out to-morrow?"

"We shall be sure to be out in the garden some time or other—that is if it doesn't pour with rain," answered Mary, quite willing to cultivate the acquaintance of any one who knew Bill Darby.

Besides, this young fellow was so good-looking that Mary was charmed to talk to him, and she delighted in making Bill jealous.

"Mind you walk my way then," resumed the young man. "I shall be tidying that border by the side-walk. Now don't forget."

"I'll see about it," replied the girl, secretly very much pleased. "But I wonder what Bill would say to your knocking up a chat with me, or how your young woman would like it, for you've got one, I'll be bound."

"Oh, as to Bill, he's too sensible a chap to think any harm of my having a word or two with a nice girl like you. I shall look for you, don't disappoint me."

"Very well," said Mary, laughing. "But do tell me your name. You know mine, I suppose?"

"My name's Jim Saunders, and yours is Mary—Mary—I always forgot your surname."

"Mary Carter," she said; "so now we're introduced regularly. But I daren't stop here. Good night, Mr. Saunders."

"Good night, Miss Carter. How is your young lady? Mr. Fox told me what was the matter. I'm lodging there, you know."

"Are you though?" said the girl.

"Yes; he and Mrs. Fox are great friends of mine. But, I say, how is your young lady?"

"Very sadly. She has fretted very much all day. They won't let her friends see her—not even her poor papa; and she watched her sisters go away this morning, and was downright broken-hearted."

At that moment a hasty call sounded within the house—"Mary, Mary!"

"I must go!" exclaimed the girl hurriedly. "You look for me, and most likely you'll find me to-morrow, Mr. Saunders;" and she disappeared.

The young gardener gazed after her with regret, and scanned the upper windows intently, till the portly form of Mrs. Feathers recalled him to his surroundings.

"Young man," she said, coming to the door, "I want you to run a errand for me to the village—will you?"

"Certainly, ma'am," he replied, hurrying forward.

"Thank ye; I'm sure you're very obliging. 'Tis to take these letters to the post, for they've been forgot, what with one thing and another. You'll be in time if you start directly."

"I'll run all the way," he answered bowing.

"That is kind," said Mrs. Feathers. "Come back, and you shall have some supper and welcome."

"'Tis you who are kind now, ma'am," replied the young man. "I'm much obliged; but I've agreed to go back to Mrs. Fox's to supper. Now let me run with the letters."

"Well, he is a civil-spoken young man, to be sure," mused Mrs. Feathers, watching him out of sight. "That old gardener would have made no end of a fuss about going the mile to the village."

And then she too retreated into the house and fastened the door, for it was dark now, and a chill evening.

On re-entering her apartments Mabel sank down into a chair, letting her hands fall listlessly before her and thinking constantly of her great grief.

"It will kill me!" she said in the depths of her heart.

What other end indeed could there be with days passed in such loneliness, and with such remembrances to fill them? Since Mabel had taken up her sad abode at the cottage she had become sensibly thinner and paler.

She looked like a lovely statue, like a girl to whom life was a thing of the past—she, who yet stood on life's threshold.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MECHANICALLY Mabel drank the tea which Mary presented, and then sat perfectly still, with a fixed look gazing into space.

Mary watched her furtively, lingering over small arrangements of trifles on the table, wishing to say something to "rouse" her young mistress, but not liking to stay too long in the room, as it was customary for her to remain in the adjoining apartment. At last she turned reluctantly to quit the room, when Mabel, in a voice sharp with agony, startled her by calling to her to stay.

"If I died, Mary, would you do something for me?" she said, in a stricken tone. "When persons die, their wishes are attended to—are they not?"

"Oh, my dear miss," said Mary, alarmed at the question, "don't you think about dying, but about getting well! You're so young—there's a many years before you, I hope. But you may be sure I'd do anything in the world you asked me. What was it you were thinking of?"

"I want to write a good-bye to my sisters, Mary, and to my brother, and—and to Lord Wynmore, if I am never to see them any more. If I died, you would let them each have my letter, wouldn't you, Mary? What could it matter when I was dead?"

"I would, miss—I promise faithfully!" answered Mary, ready to cry.

"You would? Give me a sacred promise—such as you would give to a dying person," said Mabel, rising and standing before the girl. "Promise me faithfully."

"I do promise most faithful, miss," returned Mary.

"That is not enough; people forget their promises. See—here is a Bible! Promise me on that!" cried Mabel excitedly.

The terrified Mary obeyed.

"There—you have eased my heart a little," said the unhappy girl, with a deep sigh. "And now I will tell you one thing I shall put in the letters, Mary. I shall ask my eldest sister and my brother and Lord Wynmore each to give you twenty pounds for your kindness to me, and for taking them the letters, which are not to be put in the post—mind that, Mary—but delivered to them with your own hand."

"I'll do it, miss; but indeed I hope you are going to get better, and to be happy," said the girl.

"No, I am not; I shall never be happy any more," was Mabel's reply, her voice sinking to a dead level of monotony. "Mary," she continued, "I will put it off. I will write a letter every day till I have done them all, and I will begin at once."

"Don't tire yourself too much, miss," said Mary; then, seeking to direct her thoughts into another channel—"And, if you please, miss, there's a large trunk come for you to-day. Dresses your papa said was in it, that you might want perhaps, miss, and that would do here, instead of getting new ones."

"Very well, Mary? I may not want them at all," returned Mabel slowly.

"Would you please to look at them to-night, miss, or to-morrow? Then I could make any alterations, or do anything that has to be done," continued Mary, with persistence.

"Very well—to-morrow then. Let the trunk be taken into my room."

When she had said this, Mabel's thoughts flew back to the matter which engrossed her—the farewell letters that she had determined to write to her nearest and dearest, in case she never saw them again.

She did not give another thought to the dresses which Mary had mentioned as having been sent to her from home; and yet, could she have divined what that trunk contained, she would have experienced such deep emotion, such overwhelming agitation, that even all which she had suffered in the past would not have equalled its intensity.

She sat dreaming on however until, seizing a pen, she began to write her farewell to Caroline.

It was not a very lengthy adieu, and consisted chiefly of earnest entreaties to her sister not to trust "that stranger."

Then came two loving farewells to her younger sisters, in which she said no word of their father.

To what end should she mention him? Silence was in this case imperative. She could not alter the fact that they would have to spend a large part of their lives with one who—she shuddered as she remembered the bitter fact—had probably meditated a dark crime.

Better than that they should be ignorant of it.

As she folded up the last letter Mrs. Feathers knocked at the door.

"If you please, miss, it is nigh upon eleven o'clock," she said. "Ought you to be sitting up so late?"

"I suppose not; and I am keeping Mary up," replied Mabel—"so I will leave off writing now. Good night, Mrs. Feathers."

Mary was awaiting her up-stairs.

"Here is the trunk, miss," said the maid, "and here are the keys. I can set about altering the dresses, if you wish to-morrow."

"I will look at them before we walk in the garden, Mary. It is too late now."

"Oh, yes, miss!"

And then Mabel prepared to retire to rest—rest that was broken by wild dreams and numerous wakings, whilst Mary slept on peacefully at the end of the apartment.

Had she known what the trunk contained, could she have awaited the morrow's dawn? Hardly.

It would have been torture to Mabel to lie there with such a secret near her without endeavoring at once to possess herself of it.

And it was her father himself who had caused the trunk to be forwarded to her—her father—Mr. Richard Charlford, of Charlford House, whom all his neighbors thought of with such pitying interest! Indeed, since his daughter's illness, they were eager to do anything which might give him the smallest pleasure.

At midnight all was quiet in the cottage, and soon Mary's deep breathing told that she slept profoundly; but Mabel could not rest. Detained there a prisoner, accounted insane by the world, what hope in life was left her? Surely it was better that she should die and leave this cruel world altogether!

"Oh, Neville, Neville," she cried in the depths of her soul—"oh that I might clasp your hand in mine before I die!"

It became so intolerable to her to lie there in the deep stillness that she rose softly, and, feeling in the darkness for her dressing-gown, threw it round her, and went to the window; then, gently drawing back the curtains, she looked out at the night.

It was moonlight; but there were no confusing shadows. The wind had gone down; the trees were still.

She could distinguish the faint outlines of the paths in the garden and the place where a few hours before she had paced up and down, guarded by Mary.

How many times would she be forced to walk there again, caring only that the heavy minutes might fly by and deliver her at length from her captivity?

She sat for some moments with her face buried in her hands, then, with a restless movement, gazed once more over the landscape without.

As she did so, a faint cry almost escaped her, for she distinguished the figure of a man, with his arms folded, leaning against a tree, who was fixedly regarding the cottage.

Her first feeling of fear quickly gave place to one of additional dejection.

"This man evidently has orders to watch the house in order to prevent my escape—that must be the explanation of his presence. Who is he? Is he my uncle or my father, or is it the gardener?"

She scrutinized the stranger closely through the window-pane, and felt sure that the figure watching the house was the young man who had been mowing the lawn on the previous afternoon.

"He takes turns with Fox—this perhaps is the explanation of Fox's rheumatism! Oh, what does my father mean to do with me? Am I to be kept here until I really become what I am now thought to be, insane?"

For a long time she remained with her eyes fixed upon the figure standing on the lawn; and it was not till two o'clock sounded that the man moved away, keeping carefully on the grass as he did so.

Till this moment, although the idea of escape had floated through her mind, it had not been fully determined on by her.

Whither could she go if she managed to get beyond the walls of the cottage? She would run a terrible danger of stricter surveillance—nay, of harsh treatment—if her attempt failed, yet surely her father would not keep her there forever!

Thus she had reasoned at first; and in addition there was the grave difficulty of not knowing whither to go or how to live, for she was without money or valuables; moreover, she did not know where Dick was, and to Lord Wynmore she could not go.

Ten thousand reasons existed why he and she could never be more to each other than they were now; nor could she ever explain to him that her father's secret crime, whatever it was, was that which must divide their lives.

She was friendless then, penniless, cut off from the world.

Nevertheless a wild desire arose within her to escape, and she began to plan how she might accomplish it.

She trembled as she pondered the matter. To try and to fail would be too terrible.

To try and succeed would render her almost helpless, and that at a time when she would have to battle at tremendous odds with the world.

She decided however to undertake the task at all risks; and as she sat in the darkness she made her plans. She would go to New Zealand—she would place the distance of half the globe between her and her father; and from the Antipodes she would send him a few words, telling him that she desired only to die out of his sight.

She would write to Dick too, but in very different fashion, and to Neville; and perhaps, after many years, when in the course of nature her father should die, she would return, a grave and altered woman, to her old home—return to find Neville wedded to another, and herself forgotten.

Well, was it not better that it should be so?

Could any length of time efface from her remembrance the incidents of the night when she had witnessed her father's attempt to drug his enemy? To drug him? Was it, despite his firm denial, a more fearful attempt?

Ah, come what might, she could never forget that the mere fact of such an aim declared that there was something dark to hide.

And should she be the one to connect with this hidden deed of shame the name of Neville Wynmore? Not while she lived and felt what honor meant! No; she was indeed lost to him whom she worshipped so fondly; but to Dick, to her sisters, she was not lost forever.

In the days to come they would embrace one another.

Her idea was to choose New Zealand as her place of refuge, that being so far off; she chose it also because she had noticed advertisements for respectable girls to go out to that colony as domestic servants. Wholly inexperienced as she was, she imagined that she could perform some kind of house-work and learn to wait on a lady.

From the books she had read concerning this colony her impression was that any person willing to work could obtain employment.

The main thing was to get free—to walk to London—to find her way to the shipping-agent's, and then lose no time in setting sail.

Poor Mabel, had she been less ignorant of the world's ways, she would have realized the madness of her scheme, and have known that she, a delicate and distinguished-looking girl, could not present herself at the shipping-agent's without exciting comment as to who she was.

There was also the matter of the journey to London and of the necessary outfit for the voyage.

She told herself she must do without the outfit, and, as for the journey, she still possessed a watch and a brooch or two which she wore every day—these she could dispose of for a few pounds, surely.

She did not imagine the difficulty of such a proceeding, and that on the road to London she would not too easily find a shop at which she might dispose of her trinkets. But youth is inexperienced, and Mabel was both inexperienced and despairing.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was a deep disappointment the next morning to Mabel's attendant to see a steady downpour of rain, which gave promise of lasting the whole day.

There was no chance in such circumstances of walking out with her young lady, and of having the pleasure of exchanging words and smiles with Jim Saunders.

But to Mabel herself it mattered nothing whether the day broke with cloud or sunshine—nothing could dispel the mist which obscured her life.

Still, despairing as she was, the new determination she had made awakened effort; and effort brought back some vigor of life.

"Won't you look over your dresses this morning, miss?" asked Mary, after Mabel had breakfasted. "It is so wet that there will be no walking in the garden, and looking over your trunk will give you something to do."

"By-and-by; I have my letters to finish—the letters you promised to deliver for me, Mary, in case of my death," said Mabel.

After all, she might fail in her attempt to get away.

It would be better therefore to write her farewells and place them safely in the hands of her kind attendant, thought the girl.

So again Mabel sat down to write, leaving the dresses unlooked at.

In the afternoon Jane came in Mary's place, saying that Mary had a headache; but the truth was that, as Tuesday was approaching, there was the dress for the dance and supper to be tried on, so that, whilst Mabel believed her maid to be lying down in Jane's room, she was in reality with Mrs. Feathers, anxiously surveying her dress in the glass, adding a bow here and looping up a fold there, so as to ensure a killing effect.

She wished that Bill Darby could see how well she looked just then; nor would she have been averse from encountering the handsome new gardener whose acquaintance she had made on the previous day.

At that moment he was cleaning windows in the kitchen, as it was so wet out of doors and there was nothing else to set him to do.

He had excited great merriment in Mrs. Feathers, who had laughed till the tears came into her eyes at the way that young man set about it.

"Haven't you never cleaned a pane o' glass before?" she cried, as she watched the awkward way in which he went to work. "There—I'll show you! You know more about mowing a lawn than cleaning a window, that's certain!"

Jim Saunders, much confused, murmured something about his mother never having put him to house-work: and the housekeeper, laughing still more heartily, exclaimed—

"'Tisn't difficult to find that out; but never mind, she taught you to be good-natured anyhow, as was seen by your being so obliging last night about taking them letters that was forgot to the village. Well, one good turn deserves another, which I always say; so now, young man, sit down and drink a cup o' tea, and tell me whether you'd like to go to a dance."

Jim Saunders colored, and indeed seemed startled for the moment.

He recovered himself quickly, and declared warmly that there was nothing he should like better.

"Well, there, I'll get you a invitation—see if I don't!" said Mrs. Feathers cordially. "They'll be glad to see a good-looking fellow such as you. 'Tis a cousin of mine, very well off, that is going to be married next Tuesday as ever comes to a corn-chandler, and there's to be no end of gay doings—a grand supper and dance; and I'm invited of course. So's Mary, who tells me you know her young man, Bill Darby; and 'twill be the easiest thing in the world for me to get you a invitation too."

"Upon my word, Mrs. Feathers, you are too kind," he exclaimed gratefully. "I don't know how to thank you."

"Nonsense," returned the lady, with an air of careless grandeur, "that's nothing; and we'll go together. You be ready towards eight o'clock—or half-past will do, for supper isn't to come off till between nine and ten, and the dance later."

This offer of accompanying Mrs. Feathers and Mary quite overpowered the young gardener, but, with a good deal of embarrassment, he again accepted her proposal, proceeding to remark how glad he was that Bill's sweetheart could get away on the evening in question, as he had thought she could not leave "the young lady."

"Oh, we've managed that! We're all friends together in this house," replied Mrs. Feathers; "and so Jane, the other girl, will take Mary's place for that once, and a widow as is a chum of mine will come and stay here the night. Bless you, there's not a atom o' fear! I've been nurse in a asylum, and understands the ways o' lunatics. This one is very gentle; she'll get worse, no doubt, but it will be gradual—nothing sudden—so I can leave her with a very easy mind."

"Certainly, ma'am, just for a night," rejoined Saunders, setting down his cup and rising to go.

The housekeeper accompanied him to the door, where he repeated his acknowledgment and where she observed that the rain was pretty well over now.

"Yes—'twill be fine to-morrow, I think," he answered. "Send Mary into the garden—do now—and we can say a word now and then as she walks with the young lady."

"That I will," returned the woman heartily; and then the two separated.

Mrs. Feathers's countenance was radiant as she went back into the kitchen, but it was strange how haggard and anxious was the face of Jim Saunders as he put on his overcoat and went towards a shed in the Meanwhile, in the upper room, in the fading daylight, Mabel was writing a sad heart-rending farewell to the one whom she loved best on earth—Neville Wynmore.

She told him how well she loved him, and that it was because of this deep affection that she banished herself from the paradise of his love.

"In this world it is impossible to explain more fully, Neville, a higher duty restrains me from speaking out even to you; but when we meet on the eternal shores you will know that I never for a moment lost my mental balance, that my faculties were never clouded, that what I said was actual fact, and that in life and death your image reigned in my soul. Oh, my dear love, Heaven bless and keep you! Whatever else you doubt, never permit yourself to believe otherwise than that I die to happiness in this world in order to run no risk of wrecking yours, and that I am forever and ever "Your own

"MABEL."

"There are three letters, Mary," she said, quite exhausted with painful emotion, when an hour afterwards the maid entered the room.

Mary's face was radiant: she had been speaking to Mrs. Feathers about Jim Saunders, and was indeed so anxious to secure him for a partner at the forthcoming wedding festival that she had much difficulty in assuming an air grave enough for this solemn moment.

"Look them up at once," said Mabel, "and be silent about them to every one, Mary. Remember, you will receive twenty pounds from my brother and eldest sister and twenty pounds from Lord Wynmore if you place them yourself in their hands. And there is your sacred oath to remember."

"I sha'n't forget, miss," replied Mary, a little overawed by the young lady's impressive manner and deep sadness.

The next morning she beheld with joy a bright sky and sunshine which was quite warm for the time of year.

She would be certain to-day to have an opportunity for a walk in the garden, and thus be able to enjoy the company of Mr. Saunders.

Before noon her hopes were realized, for the instant she went into the garden, accompanied by Miss Charlford, she saw Jim awaiting her, though apparently absorbed in raking a long border.

Mabel, engrossed by the thought which now possessed her, full of her freshly-formed resolution to go to New Zealand, walked a little apart, not even glancing round at her attendant or at the man at work on the side path.

With unspeakable agitation she began to plan her escape for Tuesday—Tuesday, the day when both Mrs. Feathers and Mary would be absent.

She must seize an opportunity which was never likely to present itself again, for Jane slept very soundly, whereas Mary was becoming accustomed to rouse herself at any noise, and Mrs. Feathers had very sharp ears.

Mabel trembled at the bare idea of executing that which she meditated, but she never wavered.

She must dare all; anything was better than this living death.

But she had terrible obstacles in her path: the necessity of selling her watch and brooches to obtain a small sum for traveling was a serious difficulty to surmount—the still harder possible necessity of walking to London before she could dispose of her trinkets almost appalled her.

But she was now wrought up to the highest pitch of desperation. Let her but once get free, and she would leave nothing untried to ensure safety.

"I dare not travel by day, it must be by night; and I must hide in the wood close by, if need be, till I can move on."

She seated herself on a garden bench, and Mary left her for a few moments to have a chat with Jim Saunders.

"Aren't you well to-day, Mr. Saunders?" she asked, the smile fading from her good-natured face as she met the eyes of the young gardener.

"Of course I am; and, if wasn't, seeing you would cure me!" he answered in a jocular tone. "You'll promise me a dance or two, won't you, Miss Carter?" he added gallantly.

Mary assented willingly with a bright flush of pleasure; and then followed some remarks about Mary's dress, Jim Saunders declaring that he was sure she would look best of any of the company at the wedding party.

"I suppose she won't mind us talking—eh?" said Jim, indicating Mabel with a nod.

"Not she," replied the girl; "and, if she said anything, I could soon talk her over. She's always kind and gentle."

"I've seen lots o' lunatic folk," continued Jim Saunders, "and I feel an interest in this one, because she's in your charge. I should like to speak to her. She wouldn't be startled, would she?"

"Nothing to speak of," said Mary very quietly.

She did not like the interruption, for she wished to devote the brief moments to talking of something more interesting to herself.

"I'll just offer her a flower; that'll be an excuse for gathering one for you," said the young man quickly.

Mary, at once flattered, offered no opposition.

She did not fail to notice with immense satisfaction that Jim, having found two late winter roses which had blossomed on the verge of November, carefully selected the better one for herself, and took the other to present to the young lady, who was still reclining on the bench in a sad and listless attitude—indeed she never moved even when the gardener's footsteps sounded on the gravel path, and he stood anxiously waiting to attract her attention in order to present his flower.

Mary hastened forward, about to call the young lady's notice to the fact that the gardener wanted to speak to her.

Jim Saunders, as if determined to be his own spokesman, walked up in front of the bench where Mabel was seated, her eyes fixed on the ground, and quietly said, whilst extending his hand which held the flower—

"Will you be pleased to accept a rose, miss? They're not easy to find this time o' year."

Mary, listening as she stood by, wondered at his husky voice and nervousness; but the next instant she herself was alarmed to perceive her patient start up and look round wildly.

Was she going to faint away, or was it one of those sudden outbursts to which lunatics were subject? Jim Saunders however stood his ground.

"I hope, miss, you'll accept the flower I make bold to offer?" he said.

"The flower?" stammered Mabel, sinking back upon her seat. "Yes, yes—give it to me. I like flowers;" and tears filled her eyes.

Jim remained silent till the poor young lady had stilled her sobs; then he said gently, in a moved tone—

"Maybe I may make so bold as to bring you a posy to-morrow, miss? Flowers are made for such as you."

"Bring them—bring them; you are very kind," faltered Mabel. "Tell me who you are who take an interest in me, for I am very unhappy."

"I've come to work here a day or two in the garden, in Mr. Fox's place; he's got the rheumatism so bad, miss."

The young fellow touched his cap respectfully.

"And what is your name?" asked Mabel tremulously, for the first time venturing to look him full in the face.

"Jim Saunders is my name, miss; and I'm lodging at Mr. Fox's. Any little thing you want done I'll be proud to do, miss."

"Thank you."

Then Mabel added, as if with a great effort, "Do not disappoint me of my flowers."

"Oh, no, miss! You shall have them first thing after breakfast."

Here Mary signed to him to retire, and he returned slowly to his work, often glancing back at the bench where Miss Charlford was seated.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PLATING THE DEAD.

The disposition of the body after death has been a subject of interest from the earliest recorded era. The classic writings are filled with references to this matter; and the various kinds of burial or its equivalent, and the ceremonies attendant upon the last rites, form no inconsiderable portion of both Greek and Latin literature. The ancient kinds of burial were chiefly four—burying, burning, embalming, and storing, the latter having reference to catacombs, vaults, and similar receptacles. All are too familiar to need more than a passing reference.

The custom of the Jews seems to have been to bury the bodies of the dead; the Egyptians were the great masters of the art of embalming; the Romans excavated the great catacombs, which are one of the wonders of the Eternal City to-day; while the practice of burning bodies seems to have obtained generally among most ancient nations in certain circumstances.

Modern science, on sanitary grounds, has determined positively against the common practice of inhumation. Wherever the population is dense—as it is in all great cities—it is seen at once that the custom of burying the bodies of deceased persons is a certain and fruitful source of decease. Water and air are alike polluted and rendered dangerous to life by the placing in the earth of the lifeless lumps of clay which will in time be resolved into their original elements; but which, in the meantime, give forth noxious exhalations. For this reason the practice of intra-mural burial has been done away with, and modern cemeteries are placed as far as possible from municipal centres.

In lieu of inhumation, the scientists of the present day have devised four methods—namely, cremation, cementation, cooking, and electro-plating.

Cremation is only the old time classic pyre, without any of its unpleasant and revolting attendants. The body is reduced to a handful of ashes by intense heat in a furnace so arranged that nothing disagreeable passes off during the process.

The process of cooking is similar; but instead of being burned, the body is exposed to a flameless heat and reduced to a hard, brittle substance instead of to ashes.

Cementation does not deal directly with the body, but with its environment. It consists in hermetically sealing the coffin by placing a coat of the finest cement all around it. The advantages of a sarcophagus are in this way secured without much expense.

But the latest method, and one which is growing into popular favor, is electro-plating. It is the application of a perfectly even metallic coating to the surface of the body itself by the same process as that which produces an electrotype plate. The method is briefly this:—

The body is washed with alcohol and sprinkled over with fine graphite powder, to insure the perfect conduction of electricity. It is then placed in a bath of metallic solution containing a piece of the metal to be used. To this is attached the positive pole of a strong battery; the negative pole is applied to the corpse, and a fine film of the metal at once begins to cover the body perfectly and evenly. This may be kept up until the coating attains any desired thickness.

To this process there would seem to be no valid objection. In effect it transforms the corpse into a beautiful statue—form, features and even expression being perfectly preserved. The body being hermetically sealed within its metal inclosure, merely dries up and assumes the aspect of a mummy.

This method obviates many objections which have been urged against cremation, and at the same time meets the wishes of those whose sentiment, if nothing else, inclines them to favor the ordinary way of burial. The feeling of desecration of the human form divine, which its reduction to a handful of ashes causes to many people is entirely done away with, as no rude hand is laid upon the once loved form. No change is brought about in appearance except that face and figure are covered with a shining veil, through which the familiar lineaments appear with all their well-remembered characteristics and expression.

THE APPETITES OF BIRDS.—Birds have wonderful appetites, and the insect eaters must do great execution among the insect enemies of the farmer. This is illustrated by the estimate that a man would have to consume in every twenty-four hours sixty-seven feet of a sausage nine inches in circumference in order to eat as much in proportion to his bulk as the redbreast, whose daily food is considered as equivalent to an earthworm fourteen feet long.

"GWINE to be any cholera heah dis summer, boss?" he was asking on the market yesterday. "Can't say. Are you interested?" "Yas'. Ize got to move, an' ize got my choice between rooms down cellar an' rooms in the attick. If the cholera's comin' Ize gwine up whar' I kin git de ventilashun. If it hain't den Ize gwine down cellar an' save fifty cents a week. If you see anythin' in de papers please gimme de wink."

LITTLE FEET.

BY MARY F. SCHUYLER.

Little feet, little feet, skipping along
With your light burden of laughter and song,
Whither away in your innocent glee,
Blithe as a bird and as merry and free?
Loose locks caught by the frolicsome wind,
Tossed and tangled and interwined;
Pause but a moment an old friend to greet,
Ere you fly onward, dear little feet.

Whither away, dear little feet,
With clear peals of laughter, joyous and sweet,
Music in motion—music in tone,
Pattering here a moment, then gone;
Meeting a welcome wherever you go,
Leaving behind you a comfort and glow,
Cheering and brightening all that you greet
On life's changeful pathway, dear little feet.

Out on the highway, dear little feet,
Life's sterner trials you surely will meet,
Chilling the music of laughter and song,
Dimming your eye as you journey along;
Blotting with tears your life's spotless page,
Seaming your brow with the furrows of age;
Then look upward, with faith pure and sweet,
To One who will guide you, dear little feet.

HEART-BREAK.

BY ETHEL DE FONBLANQUE.

CHAPTER III.

I FOUND Mark in his smoking-room, writing. As I went along in my hansom I thought how I should open the subject and what I should say, but when I saw him looking so grave and so altered, everything went out of my head.

He looked up at me, and then attempted a smile. It was a very poor smile for him.

"Dear old fellow," he began, "I was just thinking of you. I am in trouble."

"Yes," I answered, "I know. I have seen Valentia."

"You have seen Valentia?" he echoed in some surprise. "She went to you then? That was cleverly done."

He laughed a hard laugh, and spoke harshly.

"Yes," I said, "she came to me. She knew I am her friend, and would try to help her and you too."

Mark frowned. He was standing by the window, the light full on his handsome features, usually so debonair, and now so fixed and stern.

"There are some cases," he said shortly, "where no help is possible or even desirable."

"But yours is no such case," I cried warmly. "Mark, you must hear me! I have heard Valentia's story. No, don't shake your head, she has told me all about the letter, and your subsequent anger. She swears she never wrote it, and I believe her."

"I suppose she swore it was not in her handwriting?" he sneered.

"No; she said it looked very like her writing, but at the same time she swore she never wrote it, never had seen it before, and even had no idea who the person addressed might be."

"It is well," Mark said hotly, "that she adds prevarication to her other sins. It is just what I might expect of her. But as it happens, rather than let there be a thread of doubt, I have been to an expert. I took him some of her letters, some of her account-books, her diary, and the letter in question, and he has declared them to be all in the writing of the same person."

This news painfully affected me, and Mark, noticing the grief in my regard, continued rapidly:

"There is nothing to say, nothing to discuss, my dear old Dan; let us at most try to keep my disgrace from the world. I shall go abroad, Valentia shall remain in England, or vice versa: for my own sake I will have no scandal. But if I could have divorced her, I would. Do you remember the first night you dined here we were talking of religion, and I accused her laughingly of having no religion at all? She said, God forgive her! that she had a religion of her own, 'the religion of love.'"

He broke off, and laughed—a laugh that was like a cry.

"I remember I said that if her oddly established creeds were overthrown, and if she became a bad woman, she would be an exceptionally bad woman. How right I was. How right I was! Don't you see before she knew me she was all in the dark, she could sin without thinking it sin, good and bad looked the same in her eyes. When I met her first at Naples, ministering to the last requirements of her disreputable old father, I thought a finer, sweeter nature never lived. He died; I married her. I asked no questions of her past, and this is my reward. I believe she loved me. I don't believe the worst woman on God's earth could be such a hypocrite as to pretend all she has been to me. But her love should have taught her truth. I think I could have forgiven her, if she had told me of her horrid past, and the stain upon her life. There, Dan, I have done. There is nothing left to say. You know it all now, and between you and me the subject will never be discussed again. I am busy making a provision for Valentia and her child, and I will appoint you trustee. You serve me in this, but there is nothing else you can do to benefit me or her in this wretched business."

"Yes there is," I said firmly. "I can find a clue to the mystery, for mystery there is. I don't believe a word of that letter, whatever the expert may say; there is foul play somewhere, and I will find it out!"

As I spoke Leah Verriker came softly into the room; she heard my last words, and looked me full in the eyes.

She looked like some weird embodied curse, I thought, in her black dress and black veil. At the sight of her, instinctively I shivered.

"Do I disturb you, Mark?" she said, in her languorous voice. "I have only just got back from Chancery Lane. Such a long, tiring day!"

Mark came across from the window, with his miserable attempt at a smile.

"By-the-by, Leah," he said, trying to speak lightly, "I must tell you, you have lost your hostess. Valentia has been called away, nothing serious, but a relation of hers at a distance is ill, and requires her. She has already gone. She left you all sorts of messages. I am doubly sorry, for of course it will cut short your visit here. But at all events you will remain until to-morrow; I am dining out to-night, so shall not be in your way."

From my heart I pitied him.

He spoke so haltingly, a child could have discovered there was some hidden meaning and yet he tried his best.

Leah the while stood with her restless eyes scanning him and me alternately. She had taken her gloves off, and her white hands, the only white things about her except her wax-like face, were writhing feverishly.

"What a strange thing!" she said softly. "Valentia knew nothing about it this morning. I heard you both talking, and as you did not bring my sealing-wax, I thought you had forgotten, and so I went out. I suppose she got a telegram? But do not think that I shall leave you," she continued lightly. "I am not afraid of being alone here, and I shall look after you until she comes back."

"I am afraid that is impossible," Mark said trenchantly.

"I don't care the least about Mrs. Grundy," she cried, restlessly tapping her foot on the floor, "and I shall not desert a friend in his time of need. You can't get rid of me so easily."

She was just turning round to leave the room, with a light laugh, when Mark stopped her.

"You mean very well, Leah, but the thing is impossible, as I said before. I leave London in a day or two, to—to join my wife."

Leah looked back over her shoulder, with an ominous gleam in her jet black eyes.

"That alters the case entirely," she said quite slowly. "So you are going to join Valentia?"

When she had left the room I felt as if an evil influence were withdrawn.

"I can't bear that woman," I said; "and I believe she is no friend to Valentia."

"Don't be unjust to her, she is honestly attached to my wife. Poor woman, she has had a great deal of trouble one way and another, and I admire her fortitude. You never liked her, but there is a great deal of good in Leah."

"Well, well!" I cried impatiently. "I don't want to discuss her. Have you no message for Valentia? What comfort can I take to the poor child who, before God, I believe to be innocent!"

"Tell her," he said in a terrible voice, "I will never to my dying day forgive her, and never will I see her again."

I drove back to the hotel thoroughly disheartened, and found Valentia standing by the window, her poor eyes strained with expectation.

"Well?" she cried, coming swiftly to meet me.

"I have seen him," I answered, "and we have talked for hours, but I have not been able to do your cause any good. Mark is fixed in his belief in that letter."

"That letter which I never wrote!"

"He says he has seen an expert, and shown him other letters and papers of yours together with that letter, and the expert declares the writing to be identical."

"Oh, my God!" the cry broke from Valentia like a stricken dove.

She covered her face with her hands and burst into tears.

"Come, come," I said, too much moved for comfort, "you must not cry. As you say yourself, there is work to do. I want you to think out many things. First of all, where—where do you keep that writing-paper?"

"Only in one place, in the escritoire in my boudoir."

"That leads out of the drawing-room?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Do you remember seeing any one using your paper, or taking any from that room?"

"No one used it but I, and no one ever entered that room but Leah and I."

"Leah!" I exclaimed, "that woman!"—and at the moment I would have given the world to have been able to fix a fault upon her. "Now, was there any one," I continued, "in the house or elsewhere, whom you should suppose was your enemy?"

Valentia's sweet face smiled in answer.

"I do not think I have an enemy in the world," she said simply.

"There was no servant, for instance, who had a grudge against you?"

"They were all devoted to me," she answered.

I broke off sheerly nonplussed. The letter was then clearly not the work of an enemy.

In my own heart I named Leah as the only person who could possibly be Valentia's enemy, and yet there was not a shred of evidence against her.

With that cursed handwriting proved as Valentia's, every supposition seemed useless.

"Tell me about your life before you married," I said at last. "You never knew any one called Arthur? You never had any other lover than Mark? Tell me all you can."

"There is so little to tell," she said sadly. "My mother died when I was very young. I was brought up by an old relative in Pisa. I never left there until a year before I married. My father came and fetched me away, and for a couple of months we were in Rome. My father was very kind to me in his way, but he was not like Mark. He got ill at Naples, and for some months I nursed him. He got to know Mark somehow, at Rome, and Mark found us out at Naples; then my father died, and I was alone, and then Mark married me."

Poor child! her story of the father who was very kind in his way, but not like Mark.

Who got to know Mark—somehow—formed such a contrast to the happy radiant life in which I found her months before.

In truth, there did not seem to be much mystery in her story, and again I felt baffled.

For a long time I sat silent, looking at Valentia, who in sympathy with my mood remained motionless like some beautiful picture of a saint.

Poor child! the look in her wonderful eyes, at once so piteous and so mystical, would have won a harder heart that mine. But what was I to do? I wondered and wondered till I felt my brain reel.

At last I said:

"Valentia, there is nothing to do but wait. I must get you and the child out of London into some quiet country place where you can live peacefully for a little while. I shall be near at hand, Richmond or somewhere, and I will come and see you often. In the meantime I will remain as much with Mark as possible, to see what time and patience will do."

Valentia rose from her chair and flung herself on her knees before me.

"Oh, don't send me away!" she cried passionately. "Don't send me away. How am I to live without my husband? Don't you see it will kill me? I love him so, it will be like cutting out my heart to part from him. Take me back to him," she implored, waxing desperate, "he will listen to you, you are his friend. Tell him I love him so, I cannot live without him. Tell him he must believe me! He must, he shall!——"

The poor child's arms flung out wildly were clinging to me in the vehemence of her excitement.

Her face, eloquent with tears, was raised imploringly to me. I thought if Mark could see and hear now, he would believe.

"What can I do? what can I say?" he cried, her emotion growing stronger and stronger; "how can I prove it? Can I tear my heart out? Can I go to God and ask him to uphold me? I never was religious, perhaps, but I can swear on the head of my little child, Mark's little child, that all that wicked letter is a lie. Oh, take me to him, he has had time to reflect, he will believe me now."

As she spoke I remembered his last words:

"Tell her I will never to my dying day forgive her, and never will I see her again."

"Calm yourself, Valentia," I said gently, "there is no good in giving way. I cannot take you to Mark, for he is going away; you must be patient, my poor child, and wait. Something tells me all will come right. We must wait and hope."

The following day I installed Valentia and her child in a pleasant sunny cottage at Richmond.

On my return I went to see what plans Mark had made, and I found him already gone.

"Mr. Chisholm left a message for you, sir, to say he would write in a day or two from the Continent," the servant said.

CHAPTER IV.

THREE weeks went by, and I received two or three letters from Mark dated from Aix-les-Bains. They were short and uncompromising, containing little or no news, and breathing small hope of future reconciliation.

One night, quite the end of the season, I was dining at the house of some old friends.

There were a good many people present, and after dinner several more came in and there was to be some music. I remained some time downstairs smoking and talking over my wine.

When I got upstairs the rooms were full, and some singing was going on. I slipped quietly into a seat behind the rest, and presently the song came to an end. Just then I heard some one say:

"Oh, Mrs. Verriker, how I wish you would show us some of your wonderful 'willing.'"

The name struck me. I looked up, and, hidden myself, I saw Leah Verriker. She was looking very handsome in her long black dress, and was smiling and excusing herself.

However, her hostess insisted, and Leah appeared only to want a little pressing. After a few moments there was a hush in the room.

A young girl was put outside the door, and all the others were consulting as to what Mrs. Verriker should will her to do. I could not quite hear what they had decided.

I was standing up behind all the rest, and had found a clear space commanding a good view.

Leah did not see me. She stood in the middle of the room, a sinister and rather triumphant expression lighting her black eyes.

Presently the young lady was led in, her eyes tightly bandaged with a handkerchief. She stood quite still with her back to us, and Leah approached her, stretching out her hands, the fingers of which she extended so that they came within a few inches of the girl's neck.

For some minutes we all remained in suspense, then the young lady began to move slowly forward with a groping movement.

She went up to a table where there was an inkstand and a blotting-book, took a chair, and began gently to move her hands about. She took a pen, and then some paper, and in a slow automatic way she began to write!

I held my breath. My heart was beating so loud, I thought every one would hear it throbbing.

She continued for some moments writing, her hand moving painfully and laboriously over the paper. At last she ceased, dropped her hands, and remained motionless.

Again we waited; then suddenly she lifted the bandage from her eyes, and said:

"I don't think I have anything more to do."

Several people got up, and took the paper, which some one read out.

It ran thus:

"MY DEAR FLORENCE,—I returned from Rome yesterday. I had a very bad journey home owing to the country being so flooded. I will come and see you in the course of a day two. Your affectionate.

"MARIAN."

The young lady herself was as much surprised as every one else.

"The odd part of it is," she said, laughing, "that I have never been to Rome, nor do I think I know a Florence. Mrs. Verriker's influence made me write it."

Several people stood round Leah, exclaiming at her extraordinary power.

She looked a little excited, a fitful color coming and going in her pallid face, and she seemed not a little proud of her achievement.

"This is nothing!" she said gaily, her words ringing distinct. "Before now, I have willed a person to write a letter, I myself standing in another room."

The light that had been growing clearer and clearer in my brain burst into sudden fire.

It was like some terrible revelation. At that moment Leah stood before my eyes, self-accused as the author of the horrible letter that had caused the ruin of Valentia's life.

So great was my inward excitement, that almost I could have denounced her before them all. It was a moment of supreme emotion.

How I got away I do not know, but the first thing I did was to write a telegram to Mark, and give strict orders to my servant to take it out the first thing in the morning.

The next day I took an early train to Richmond. Valentia during the past three weeks had passed through many phases of suffering. At first her grief was loud and passionate.

She grieved for Mark, the loss of her husband was bitter; she missed his individual presence, she hungered, she said, for his voice, his look.

Latterly she had seemed not to miss him so much, and gave all her absorbing love to her child. The little one was delicate and needed all her care.

She also began to feel sorrow—vehement sorrow—at the fact that Mark had not believed her.

It was characteristic of that loving nature first of all to miss his presence with acute sorrow, and secondly to feel grief at his distrust. In everything her love was stronger than her pride.

But when I arrived and poured out my wonderful news, I found Valentia strangely cold. Not cold to me, but cold to my news.

She seemed scarcely at all affected, and her unusual indifference had in it a pathetic significance.

"He will come back now!" I cried; "he will believe."

"Do you think so?" she said calmly. "I wonder if it will be too late?"

"What do you mean, Valentia?" I asked in some surprise.

"Oh, nothing," she answered, smiling strangely. "Have you never heard of starving men who, just as they are dying, are offered a rich repast, and can no longer find the strength to eat?"

Her eyes dilated terribly. It was as if some strange power had come to her.

"You don't know what you say," I cried roughly.

"Perhaps not," she answered.

A little later I left her. I could make little sense out of her. She seemed to me stupefied with much trouble. I had many things to do, and I intended to start for Paris that night to meet Mark there on his way home.

I arrived in Paris the next morning, and had little difficulty in finding Mark, who had traveled as fast as he could on receipt of my telegram.

My story was soon told, and Mark's agony of self-reproach was great. One thing, however, he could not understand, and that was what motive could have in-

duced Leah to do so wicked an act. I felt that the solution of the mystery was simple, and I told Mark roundly that she was prompted by nothing more or less than jealousy, and a mad desire to oust Valentia and win him back to herself. This Mark would not believe.

"Do you remember," I said, "how anxious she was to remain in the house that day? It was with the greatest difficulty, and by going away yourself, that you got rid of her."

"That is true," he mused, "but yet I cannot believe a woman could play so vile a part for jealousy."

I was determined to prove it, so I induced Mark to send Leah a telegram saying he was returning home for a few hours, and would like to see her. This done, we continued our journey.

It was night when we arrived, and we found a note waiting from Mrs. Verriker. She expressed her delight at his return, and rather than risk the chance of missing him, she said she would come and see him that very night an hour after his arrival.

I impressed it upon Mark that he was to treat her kindly and well, so as to give her no idea that he knew nothing of her villainy. I myself remained in an outer room where I could hear all that passed.

Leah was punctual to the moment. She came in looking excited and very restless.

"How good of you, Mark," she cried, "to let me know you were coming back! But you are not really going away again in a few hours?"

"I am afraid I must!" he said, holding her little white hand in his, and looking down at her with a peculiar expression. "But you don't ask after Valentia."

"Valentia?" she echoed in surprise. "Oh, of course, how stupid of me, dear Valentia! how is she?"

"She is not very well, but she will be better soon!" he said with some meaning.

She looked puzzled, and then, as if acting on impulse, she said:

"My poor Mark! I hear you have had some trouble about her. I am so sorry for you!"

For a moment he did not answer; he turned away, and with some effort he said:

"I am going to America in a day or two, my dear Leah; I may not see you again for some time."

"You are going to America! and alone, of course? Oh, Mark, my darling," she cried with some passion, "forgive me for speaking now, but I must. I know you are unhappy, I know you have been deceived. My heart has bled for you, for I have always loved you, always, up to this very minute—God forgive me for it! If you are going away let me come with you, let me be your servant, your companion—anything; for I love you better than my life. I will leave my children. I will think of nothing but you. And you, my poor darling, you will need my comfort and my love."

As she spoke she fell forward almost into his arms.

Fool that I was! at that moment I pitied her, for although her sin was great, her love was strong.

Hardly had she finished when Mark turned on her with a terrible gesture.

"Keep off," he cried violently. "How dare you speak of love, such as you? I believe if there were not another woman on God's earth at this moment, I should recoil from you as I should from the pestilence. You, to dare to speak of Valentia! You—who should not presume to mention her pure name."

Leah stood trembling and livid, her whole restless figure in black relief against the strong lamplight.

"Take care," she hissed, "take care, Mark; do not make me a desperate woman. I have lived only to regain your love, but if you drive me desperate I might do some evil thing."

"Not more evil than what you have already done," he cried, "or rather tried to do. It was you who willed Valentia to write that vile letter, thinking to make misery between me and Valentia. Thank God you did not succeed!"

She recoiled from him in amazement. Meanwhile I came quietly in the room.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Verriker," I said. "I must congratulate you on your wonderful success the other night at Mrs. Vaughan's party. Your power of willing is extraordinary, but I never should have imagined, had you not told us so yourself, that it could go so far as to will a person to write a letter, you yourself standing in another room!"

Leah grew white to the very lips, and then she laughed a horrible laugh.

"Well," she said, flashing round on us both, "what if I did? I don't care if you do know it. I hated Valentia. I hated her happiness and her fair, calm ways. I hated Mark almost for a time, and then I swore I would win him back. My God! how I have failed. It was easy enough to see I had a mesmeric influence over Valentia, but I hardly knew it would be so strong, as I had not done any willing for many years."

Suddenly her voice softened; she approached Mark almost humbly.

"Say you forgive me, Mark," she murmured; "I played for a high stake, and I have lost, so say you forgive me!"

For answer he only took her hand, and led her to the door. "Go," he said, "may God forgive you."

When Leah had gone Mark became feverishly impatient to get to Valentia. But it was no use.

The last train had started some time before, and there was nothing to do but wait till morning.

We breakfasted early, and caught a train which took us to Richmond soon after ten. Mark was very silent—silent from sheer happiness.

The moments seemed hours until we reached the house. At last we arrived. On the threshold I hesitated.

"I will wait here," I said; "you must go in alone."

But Mark laid his hand on my arm, with a gesture, half command, half entreaty.

"I have need of you," he told me briefly. "Come!—I hardly dare go in alone!"

A servant threw open the door of the morning-room.

For a moment Mark faltered, his whole face working with strong emotion, in another instant he sprang forward, and I followed him into the room.

"My darling! My poor darling!" he cried wildly.

And there in the light of the clear morning sun stood Valentia with her child in her arms.

She lifted to him a terrible face. The remorseless sunbeams were streaming over her crown of russet hair, every fine thread turned to red gold; her face was deadly white, and out of her strange pallor her eyes blazed like live fires.

She appeared to my excited fancy taller than she had ever been before—majestic, transfigured, like some statue of avenging fate.

She looked towards Mark steadily, her singular regard meeting his eager eyes without one flash of recognition. And when she spoke her voice sounded low and hollow:

"Who speaks?"

Mark stood spell-bound, but here he dashed forward.

"It is I! Mark! Your husband!"

His passionate cry broke off, frozen by the cold apathy of her face.

"My husband?" she murmured incredulously. "My husband? You forget! I have no husband. I am an outcast."

A sob broke from Mark, and with a sudden impulse he caught her in his trembling arms.

"My darling!" he cried. "Look at me! Listen to me! I have come back to beg your forgiveness, to love you, to comfort you, to live only for you. Give me one word, one look, to say you will forgive me."

Valentia slowly disengaged herself, her frozen face unrelenting.

"It is too late," she said gravely; "do you not see it is too late? I have hungered for your voice, your look, your touch. I would have died of sheer joy for the sight of your face all those weary weeks. But you left me to hunger in vain, and now I am starved—starved to death."

There was no vehemence in her words. They dropped like icicles upon the stillness and my heart misgave me.

"Death!" she echoed, with a strange smile. "Is it that which is so near me? I am drifting out somewhere—no man knows where—I was never religious, you know," she added simply. "You have said so yourself. My religion was love! And that failed me!"

Mark groaned in an agony of self-reproach.

The child had struggled to its feet, and stood, a little uncertain figure, watching all our faces in much wonder, and almost on the verge of tears.

Suddenly, attracted by some glittering thing that hung to Mark's watch-chain, it staggered towards him, holding out one little hand, and smiling a confident baby smile.

In a few moments Mark lifted it in his arms.

His poor little child! He had forgotten it till that moment, in his pleading with its mother.

Valentia watched her child with a look of infinite love. I saw that her only chance was through her child.

"Valentia," I said, "Mark's whole heart is breaking for you. Do you not see your child in his arms to draw you towards him? For his sake, and for the little one, go to him, and give him back your love."

"My love!" she cried with sudden passion—"my love! where is it? Who will give it back to me? Do you suppose I would not love him now if I could? But it is dead—dead! There is no answer here," striking her clenched hand against her heart, "all this is dead."

But out upon her miserable words broke the child's bright laugh. He had found some wonders on his father's chain, and his laugh was one of sheer delight.

"Give him to me," she said, holding out her arms to Mark. "I shall be here so short a while, I cannot spare him yet. When I am gone you will be happy with him, and he will comfort you, but not let him come to me."

She sank into a chair, and I knew she was dying.

The little boy, all unconscious, laid his gold head against her breast, and over those two faces the relentless sun streamed like the glory of transfiguration.

Slowly, with her last look yearning on her child, the heavy lids fell, closing for ever those wonderful eyes. One sigh, and she was gone.

Mark fell on his knees beside her with a terrible cry, and out of his dead wife's arms he lifted his living child.

The doctor called it neuralgia of the heart. I called it heart-break.

[THE END.]

KING MILAN of Servia makes nine-pins playing a hobby. He was recently presented by the Prince of Montenegro with a carved set of balls and pins manufactured of extremely hard wood.

THE HINDOO FAKIR.

THE Fakir, or devotee of India, is thus described: You start and edge away as you see a Fakir seated on a tuft of palm leaves.

He is certainly not an Adonis. But he must be a very holy man, for one of his baskets for collecting alms covers a head that is matted with dirt and cow-dung. His face is thickly coated with the gray ashes of the same unsavory material, and his eyes are beautified by circles of bright blue.

All the rest of his skin is likewise smeared with these ashes. Round the loins of his otherwise naked body is wrapt a filth brick-dust colored cloth.

On his feet are sandals tied on with bits of dirty rags; in his hand is a mendicant's staff, and before him is a basket, into which he expects the passers-by to cast rice, and betelnut and rice.

Horrible creatures are these fanatic devotees, and equally horrible are the practices by which they seek to maintain a reputation for holiness.

Some of them keep their fists clenched till the nails grow through the back of their hands; others hold one or both arms aloft until the limb becomes dry, withered and immovable; others roll their bodies for thousands of miles to some place of pilgrimage, or measure the distance by continuously extending their body at full length on the road; many suspend themselves for hours head downwards, or stand on their head, or chain themselves for life to trees, or live heavily fettered in iron cages, or bury themselves up to the neck in the ground, yea, even below it, leaving only a little hole through which to breathe; others remain under water for an incredible space of time; while others again, even in the hottest season, kindle heaps of fire round their person and sit in the midst.

The Sanyasees, who are believed to be the highest of all Fakirs, observe no caste, and, where they are allowed, go about in a state of nature.

The Fakirs' power of self-torture may appear to you as something uncanny; perhaps the gentleman with the cloven foot has a hand in it, but you must remember that these devotees make use of intoxicating drugs, so as to be always in a state of partial insensibility; moreover, they resort to a variety of tricks to gull the simple.

That their austerities do not proceed from a true spirit of mortification is evident, for in self control the Fakirs are the very antipodes of what they profess.

They are, as a rule, sensual, avaricious, irascible, quarrelsome and turbulent.

The credulity of the uneducated Hindoos is almost unbounded. If a Brahmin secretes an idol in a small hole in the earth, and, allowing part of the image to be seen, asserts that a deity has appeared, scores of people will flock to the spot with offerings, etc.

If moistened chana or pulse is secretly laid under the image, numbers will take the rising of the idol by the swelling of the grain as a miracle.

In the Administration Report of the Central India Agency for 1884-85, there is a remarkable account of the doings of the Fakirs at the Sanghast festival at Ujjain. The fair was visited by cholera, which it was impossible to check as "the Fakirs, who attended in great numbers, were absolutely defiant of all control, and resisted all restrictions on their movements."

It is but a few years ago that the Durbar troops, with loaded cannon and muskets, were unable to preserve the peace between the rival bands of worshippers seeking to bathe at the propitious moment in the most sacred portions of the stream; and numbers have been killed in these fierce contests.

Even to-day the ascetics are very unmanageable. One instance of this may be recorded as showing the barbarism still existing in the country.

A band of that loathsome sect known as the Agori Panths came to Ujjain at the beginning of the fair, and, demanding some goats from the authorities, were refused. On this they proceeded to the burning ghat, and taking a corpse from the pile, began to devour it.

The horrified spectators summoned the police, but these naked fanatics only desisted on being promised the goats which had been before refused them.

THE *Ausland* reports a peculiarly interesting "find" in Sweden. In the course of the researches going on at the cost of the Royal Swedish Academy of Antiquities, a burial-place of the bronze age has been opened. A stone coffin, 11 feet in length, and containing two corpses, was discovered. One of the corpses had been burnt, and was wrapped in woolen cloths, while the other, which bore no sign of having been exposed to a fire process, was inclosed in an oak coffin. Portions of the woolen garments and the skins in which the bodies were dressed are well preserved. A bronze sword, also found there, has suffered much from oxidation, but its wooden sheath, covered with leather, is in excellent preservation. The writer spoke of it as 2500 years (?) old. The discovery is important in two aspects—first, only once before in Sweden has any woven material been found belonging to the bronze age, while no oak coffin of that period in such a perfect condition has hitherto come to light; next, it is certainly unique to find in one and the same grave, and of the same period, examples of two different species of burial.

AT the door of a Parisian tobacco shop is the legend. "Gentlemen are requested not to smoke inside the shop."

Scientific and Useful.

PAPER BOTTLES.—A paper beer bottle is to be the next achievement in the bottle line. Ink, paints, oils and certain acids have for some time past been put in paper bottles, as being safer from breakage and freezing than those made of glass.

NEW AXES.—An axe has been invented provided with a detachable blade, which can be renewed when worn or destroyed, thus saving the expense of a new axe. The blade is attached to the body of the axe by a bolt, which holds the parts firmly together.

ITS COST.—Steam power, even in quantities of 500 to 600 horse-power, costs to create and maintain it $50 per horse-power per annum. Water power would only cost about half as much, and waste water power may be found in all parts of the country.

ELECTRICITY.—The electric incandescent light which has been used in photographing the interior of mines is now to be applied to photograph the bottom of the sea, sunken vessels and submarine works. The uses of electricity are developing in a myriad of ways.

THE GOOD.—An eminent New York physician says. "Let us hold fast to that which is good," and among the good things he reckons catnip tea for anything; onion sirup for coughs and colds; weak lye for sick stomach; infusion of common black tea for sore eye; soft soap and white pine gum for boils and felons, etc.

THE SHOP.—A set of small drawers for work-shop use that will hold powders, or even liquids, is useful. Obtain a number of old sardine boxes. Lay the box top downward on the stove, and when the solder begins to melt lift the box, and the ragged remains of the cover will fall off. After cleaning out the oily deposit, put in each box a facing of wood a little larger than the end and screw a little knob to this from the point, punching the hole through the tin by an awl. A rack to hold them is easily made, as they are all of the same size.

WHAT IS NEEDED.—A late English scientific journal enumerates the following as among the inventions which are specially needed at the present time: Macaroni machinery, good red lead-pencils, type-writers that will work on account books and record books, indelible stamp canceling ink, a practical car-starter, a good railway-car ventilator, better horse-shoes, locomotive headlights, an instrument for measuring the velocity of wind currents, apparatus for measuring the depth of the sea without sounding by line, piano-lid hinge which shall be flush on the outside, good fluid India ink for draughtsmen, a good metallic railway tie, an effective cut-off for locomotives, a method of alloying copper and iron, and a molding material for iron and brass casting capable of giving a mold that can be used over and over again.

Farm and Garden.

BY WEIGHT.—It has been suggested that farm horses be sold by weight, in addition to other qualities, so as to induce farmers to raise larger and better horses.

VERMIN.—One who has given the method a trial says that an excellent mode of ridding animals of lice is to dip a curry-comb in kerosene frequently while using it on the hide.

HOT-BEDS.—Don't attempt to make a hot-bed unless you can give it care. Leaving the sash open through forgetfulness for only one night may destroy all the advantages gained.

WEEDS.—If you wish to prevent weeds and grass from growing on the walk ways sprinkle kerosene oil freely, but be careful not to get it on the plants you wish to grow along the borders.

COAL ASHES.—Coal ashes have been used successfully around currant and gooseberry bushes to drive away borers. A plentiful mixture of ashes with soil has kept the radish maggot out of radish beds.

MILKING.—It is always best to milk rapidly, so as to get the milk out of the stable as soon as possible, in order to prevent the absorption of gases by the milk, as the cooler it becomes the more readily the milk is affected by odors.

ENSILAGE SYSTEM.—If, by the ensilage system, a greater number of cows can be kept, as compared with pasturing, the farmer will not only secure a gain by the saving of food but also by having a larger area of land to be cultivated.

HOGS.—Whenever it is noticed that the hogs eat gravel it is a sign that something that they need is lacking. A few pieces of coal, or charcoal, will probably be a cure, while the food should at the same time be varied. It is claimed that the flesh of hogs that are allowed to find their food by hunting acorns and roots in the forests is superior to that of the best fed hogs kept in pens.

FERTILIZERS.—One advantage overlooked when manure is applied on the soil, as compared with the use of commercial fertilizers, is that with the decomposition of manure is a liberation of carbonic acid gas, which acts upon the soil chemically and assists in providing a greater amount of plant food by rendering inert matter soluble. The value of manure, therefore, does not depend solely on the amount of material added to the soil, but partly to its chemical effect.

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NOTICE.

See offer to our readers on the fifteenth page.

Cold Charity.

God helps those who help themselves, and the true type of the worthy poor always prefers to depend more upon Providence and his own exertions in his terrible and unequal struggles against the gaunt wolf of poverty, than to accept the refrigerated, methodical charity that is flanked by perpetual espionage and arbitrary dictation, strained and grudgingly bestowed.

It is true that, in a world so tainted by fraud and imposition, certain precautions are necessary to guard against the artful and designing, the crafty and worthless impostor; and hence it happens that in the provisions of systematized benefactions, the innocent often suffer with the guilty.

His most sacred temple is invaded by the committee of merciful ferrets, and its privacy is exposed and ransacked in a cool and systematic manner; the flushed brow of the unhappy being is in strange contrast with the impassible features of the phlegmatic questioner.

One is placid in the possession of the good things of this life; and the fulness of his purse and larder draws a veil between his vision and the possibility of the existence of sensitiveness on the part of the other, who is so humbled and wretched.

The latter is lectured upon his improvidence in not having laid by something for a "rainy day;" and his feelings are riddled by the small shot of advice, warnings and admonitions, till at last he stands stripped of every vestige of privacy and every rag of pride, in his mortification; and the hot blood of resentment courses through his veins and speaks in his face what his paralyzed tongue refuses to say; for, in their zeal, they have marked upon his brow the degrading word, "Mendicant."

Charity should not blow a trumpet at its approach, nor wave its ostentatious banners; for by thus shocking the delicacy of the modest and retiring sufferers, it defeats its own purpose, and like "vaulting ambition, o'erleaps itself." Its noise and clamor will wound more than they will heal. Deal gently with the deserving poor.

He who would confer a blessing on a fellow mortal in distress must utterly fail if his motive be to bless only himself by the fulsome praise that notoriety will bring him.

Charity should begin at home. So, too, everything that is good, and noble, and pure. But, alas! the love of public praise is too strong, in the average human heart, to be compensated by the quiet and unobtrusive act of home charity which cannot be made known.

The left hand is apt to know entirely too much about what the right hand is doing in these matters; and the gossiping world, too, knows vastly more than is necessary about the doings of both hands. And thus it often happens charity is not "thrice blessed," for it only pampers self-vanity on the part of the giver, and brings pain to the recipient.

But, after all, a more lasting blessing is conferred, and more genuine gratitude aroused, by the simple but kindly act of restoring to the unfortunate remunerative employment. The man or woman who would shrink from the cold touch of charity's hand, would gladly accept such assistance or direction as would enable him or her to again resume the independent tread of a self-supporting being.

There is something so dark and dismal about this atmosphere of professional charity, that, to the sensitive mind, it has a suggestion of the charnel-house of his hopes of future respectability. He only wishes to be rehabilitated in the easy dress of an active life, in which "the laborer is worthy of his reward."

The great race of benefactors seems to be ended; they who knew and practiced so well the true art of philanthropy, who, with their surplus wealth, smoothed the way for so many tired and wandering feet; by whose wisdom and benevolence the rounds of their ladder were so nicely graded that the average man or woman could climb to the level to which their talents had filled them.

Let us hope that from their ashes, phœnix-like, more such philanthropists shall rise to take their places. Let him who trusts in his riches, and who, in his pomp and pride, neglects or even scorns the humble occupant of a lower plane, take heed lest he fall. The foundation on which wealth builds its structure is insecure.

We all cry out that the world is corrupted; but we never reflect what we have to thank for it, and that our open countenance of vice, which gives the lie to our private censures of it, is its chief protection and encouragement. To those, however, who still believe that evil speaking is some terror to evil doers, one may answer, as a great man has done upon the occasion, that after all our exhortations against it, it is not to be feared but that there will be evil speaking enough left in the world to chastise the guilty; and we may safely trust them to an ill natured world, that there will be no failure of justice upon this score. The passions of men are pretty severe executioners, and to them let us leave this ungrateful talk; and endeavor rather to cultivate ourselves that more friendly one recommended by the apostle—of letting all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking to be put away from us, and of being kind to one another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave us.

Kind words are within the reach of all, and when rightly used are productive of good. Hence we should cherish that trait of character of which they are the result. But many who do not realize their influence, think they are of small importance, and thus neglect them. But we must remember that our lives are made up of small things, and the more they are, the stronger will be the foundation; so each kind word that we suppress takes a pebble from the foundation of our happiness. Every kind word spoken, whether in praise or censure, at home or abroad, tends to strengthen those social ties which unite individuals into a common brotherhood of love.

A great deal of the misery of modern life comes from the tendency to keep up appearances, from trying to seem richer than we are, from aping some class, our social superiors, and all classes in consequence live beyond their means. Professional men, in many cases tradesmen, thus leave no provision for their children, after having brought them up in habits of luxury. This pretence is in the nature of lie or sham, and all honest people should scorn the dishonest appearance of this mode of life. It comes out of the despicable love of money. We respect the rich and despise the poor. How Christians manage to reconcile this attitude of mind with their professed creed it is difficult to say.

The hardest thing is to keep cheerful under the little stings that come from uncongenial surroundings, the very insignificance of which adds to their power to annoy, because they cannot be wrestled with and overcome, as in the case of larger hurts. Some disagreeable habit in one to whom we may owe respect and duty, and which is a constant irritation to our sense of the fitness of things, may demand of us a greater moral force to keep the spirit serene than an absolute wrong committed against us. In the one case endurance is all that is possible; in the other we may sometimes rightfully fight, and there is a world of comfort in the power of action.

In the supremacy of self-control consists one of the perfections of the ideal man. Not to be impulsive, not to be spurred hither and thither by each desire that in turn comes uppermost, but to be self restrained, self-balanced, governed by the joint decision of the feelings in council assembled, before whom every action shall have been fully debated and calmly determined—that it is which education—moral education at least—strives to produce.

Just as all healthy plants rise to seek the light of the sun, so the truly upright man seeks the light of intelligence to guide him on his way. He does not rest in ignorance, in prejudice. He keeps his mind open to reason and his faculties alive to discover new thought and to test its truth. He who refuses to improve his opportunities, to sift his opinions, and to learn from every source, neither deserves a good name nor will be able to secure it.

The cowardice which is degrading, and which we should all deeply despise, is that lack of moral courage which leads us to stifle our own convictions and violate our own consciences for fear of the ridicule or contempt of someone who stands by. Usually we shall find that the one whom we thus fear is worthy neither of our respect nor of our admiration.

If we would but take to heart this useful truth, "Conduct is fate," and separate the sorrows which come to us from circumstances we cannot control from the misfortunes we ourselves have created by our folly, we should come to a far wiser understanding of how to live and what not to do.

Imposture is all dissonance, let what master soever of it undertake the part; let him harmonize and modulate it as he may, one tone will contradict another, and whilst we have ears to hear we shall distinguish. It is truth only which is consistent and ever in harmony with itself.

We cannot afford to waste or ignore or despise anything; for, however useless it may appear to our short-sighted vision, we know not what treasures of future growth and advancement may be enfolded within it, or how readily it may respond to wise culture.

Complaints aggravate the temper of him who makes them, increases the trouble of his soul, irritates his mind and his heart. Complaints are rarely without sin, for they exaggerate the faults of those who have wounded us.

The great secret of avoiding disappointment is not to expect too much. Despair follows immoderate hope, as things fall hardest to the ground that have been nearest to the sky.

The martyrs to vice far exceed the martyrs to virtue, both in endurance and in number; so blinded are we by our passions that we suffer more to be damned than to be saved.

It is bad reasoning which builds up a theory of life on the narrow ledge of a passing human mood, and fails to take in the whole round of life.

The man who stirs his cup with an icicle spoils the tea and chills his own fingers. Therefore be pleasant and kind to those around you.

Time washes away the customs and opinions of mankind, but human nature remains the same in its essential qualities or principles.

The World's Happenings.

The first Sunday newspaper was published 107 years ago.

Tickling in the throat is best relieved by a gargle of salt and water.

A man near Atlanta, Ga., has found $1200 in five dollar gold pieces.

Female students in colleges in the United States are said to number 18,000.

A Racine, Wis., millionaire has never owned or carried a watch in his life.

Under the new law there are to be no more public hangings in Missouri.

The three Cole brothers, of Haralson, Ga., have their hearts on the right side.

About 35,000 clerks and other employees in Chicago are obliged to work on Sunday.

Never allow a child to use a short pencil, lead or slate. It spoils the handwriting.

The word "polite" was formerly applied to glass or marble surfaces, which we now style polished.

The wife of Senator Sabin, of Minnesota, having no children of her own, has adopted a family of nine.

A mitrailleuse is being tried in the Austrian army which will fire one thousand bullets in ninety seconds.

A Mexican has been selling to the unwary at San Jose, Cal., nuggets of tin foil, representing them to be of silver.

One hundred and twenty-five steamships ply regularly between the United States and Europe, employing more than 19,000 men.

Some sportsmen of Ogdensburg, N. J., had great success recently in duck hunting, but their game turned out to be tame ducks.

The head of the Treasury Department is responsible for the supervision of 13,827 officers and other persons employed by the Treasury.

A lucky New Yorker sold a piece of ground on Broadway, 25 by 100 feet, the other day, for $300,000—at the rate of $1,500,000 per acre.

Minnie Bond, colored, buried at Falls Church, Va., recently, had documents to prove that she was 128 years old. She remembered General Washington.

Newspaper "hawkers," including men, boys, women and girls, in London, are said to number not less than 7000, a majority of them living from hand to mouth.

Petroleum is used at the rate of 40,000 barrels per day, and, even at this enormous rate, the United States has enough on hand to supply the world for three years.

The will of a married woman just probated in Kingston, N. Y., is peculiar in that it gives all her property to her husband for life, or as long as he "remained unmarried."

A family of suicides is described in the Pall Mall Gazette—a father and four of his children had each committed suicide while laboring under attacks of temporary insanity.

A red-hot poker, which she thrust down her throat, was the extraordinary instrument of self-destruction selected by a dissipated woman of Charlottetown, N. S., last week.

Amanda Eubanks, of Rome, Ga., is the richest colored woman in the United States. She pays taxes on $200,000 worth of property, which she inherited from her father, a white man.

A shoe dealer in Brooklyn has just lost a suit he brought against a former sweetheart, to recover $11 for shoes furnished her. The court believed her story, that the shoes had been presented to her as expressions of affection.

A divorce suit in Minneapolis has developed the fact that the defendant, who was bartender in a local saloon, is the scion of a noble English family, and that his son is heir to an estate said to be worth a couple of million dollars.

They are building a squirrel cage for men in the Oswego prison. The cell moves slowly round continually, carrying the prisoner with it. The rotary motion is to prevent prisoners from breaking through the walls. They don't remain in one spot long enough for a hole to be made.

At a recent trial of bloodhounds at the convict camp at Friars' Point, Miss., a short time ago, a negro under 10 years' sentence was released and told that he could have his liberty if he escaped the dogs. The convict had three hours' start, but the dogs ran him down before he had gone twenty miles.

A tired looking chap, who was arraigned before Justice Duffy, in New York, the other day, claimed to be a carpenter, and the justice, doubting his story, offered to let him go if he named the tools used in the trade. This the prisoner did, and was promptly discharged. This shows the value of a good memory.

A "séance" in Boston was stealthily invaded by a police lieutenant one night recently and he turned up the lights when four alleged spirits were exhibiting. He arrested two of the apparitions, one male and the other female, and they are awaiting trial on the charge of obtaining money by means of deceit and fraud.

A "dandy from Leadville," as he announced himself, went into a Buffalo, N. Y., restaurant, and, pistol in hand, directed everybody to sit down. After he had enjoyed himself in this way for a while he went out followed by the proprietor, who was also a "dandy," it seems, for he gave the cyclonic Leadville visitor a fearful thumping and had him committed to jail.

Peter Forbes, of East Nissouri, Canada, at 2 o'clock one recent morning crawled into a hole in a straw stack to look after a family of little pigs that had been there but a short time. While he was investigating the mother came home, and she was angry when she saw the invader. She wouldn't let Mr. Forbes back out, and he didn't think it wise to turn around. So there was nothing to do but dig, and dig he did, and about 2 o'clock in the afternoon he emerged from the tunnel that he had excavated, a very hungry and disgusted man.

FORGOTTEN.

BY SHIRLEY WYNNE.

A low dark house set in a maze of woods,
Through which the chill wind wanders like a ghost,
And, done to death upon the beechen roods,
Leaves bare and breathless all the pallid coast.

Its topmost windows watch the heaving spread
Of vague moon-lighted ocean; the night long
It seems to listen to the distant dread—
The roar of outcast waters swift and strong.

Within, one sleepless tosses on his bed,
With worn eyes staring out into the night.
"Oh, when will yonder glooming east grow red?"
He moans, and yet will loathe the dawning light.

And there, in yonder churchyard on the hill,
Sleeps sweetly one who once had wept to know
He felt a moment's sorrow. Hushed and still
She slumbers while the long hours come and go.

O cruel deathly sleep! O cruel pain
Of sleepless anguish! So the wild waves fret
All night to the impassive shore in vain—
"Thou hast forgotten; I can ne'er forget!"

Which of Them?

BY MABEL P. WILSON

"THERE never was such a ridiculous will made before in all England! The girl must hate me like poison!"

"My dear fellow, it's not your fault;" and the little hussar puffed away at his big cigar as if to gain comfort from its volumes of smoke.

He had made the same remark several times already, and it was getting a little monotonous, but he positively could think of nothing else to say; for though "good nature" was the very essence of Fred Oldfield's life, his brain power was not developed to the same extent.

To be sure, it would have taxed a cleverer head to know how to advise Henry Vavasour under his present trying circumstances. They were briefly these.

An old uncle, who, for some unknown reason, entertained a spite against his brother (Vavasour's father), had left all his property away to a distant cousin, a young lady. But, repenting at the last minute, or determined perhaps that she should not have unalloyed enjoyment of the same, he made it conditional that she should, at the age of twenty-one, marry his nephew; and, failing this, the money was to go to a charity.

Now that the heiress had reached the required age, Vavasour received an invitation to form one of the same party with herself, at Brantham Hall, a country-house which still retained the good old custom of filling every nook and corner for Christmas.

Lady Olivia Todcastle, its owner and mistress, considered that she was only performing her duty towards the niece she had never before noticed, by thus bringing her into contact with the man fate ordained for her husband.

But her plans were nearly frustrated; for when the delicately monogrammed envelope was first opened in the quarters of the Royal Riding Hussars at Shorncliffe, its recipient vowed that no power on earth should make him accept it.

He was not going fortune-hunting to please any old woman; he should be ashamed to do it. The girl might now go—well, any where, so long as he did not see her—and so on, and so on; till Fred Oldfield came in with his cheery, "Hallo, old chap!" and heard the whole story.

He was very well off himself, with a good deal more heart than brain, which often made the responsibilities of being a rich eldest son weigh very heavily upon him. But, in this case, his inability to advise was about the best thing that could have happened, for he held his tongue until a good deal of the steam had been worked off by his friend. Then—

"She may be very nice, you know," he suggested. "And——"

"Very nasty, too! I tell you I won't do it, Chips. If I am hard up, I'm a gentleman; and I'm not going like a miserly beggar after her money." And Vavasour drew himself up to his full height of six feet two inches, as if the debts young cavalry officer may incur by overstepping the bounds of prudence are all to be paid by virtuous speeches of a like kind.

Chips waited patiently till the storm had subsided, when he said meekly—

"I was only going to remind you that—wouldn't it be fair to give the girl a chance of liking you? Because you see, the money goes away from her, if she does not marry you."

"My goodness, Chips, I'd forgotten that! Was a man ever in such a fix?" He raged about a little longer, then suddenly turned: "Look here, old fellow, I've hit it! You'll come down with me, you know. Now don't say anything, because this precious old woman says I'm to bring a friend, as "gentlemen are scarce." And you shall go as Henry Vavasour, and I as Fred Oldfield. We'll just play them a trick!"

It was Chip's turn to be surprised. He looked up at his tall friend, and down at his own neat proportions.

"My dear Vavasour, I don't see how anybody in their senses could ever mistake you for me."

"Chips, you're a donkey." Vavasour was in high good humor now. "How is anybody at Brantham to know which is me and which is you. They've never set eyes on either of us, and how can they possibly know?"

"I don't see, though, what good it will do,' returned the other doubtfully.

"It 'll do this good. If Miss Culliner falls in love with me of her own accord, well and good. If, on the contrary, she likes you best, I'll come back to the barracks, and there's an end of the matter. But I never meant to marry her against her will."

"I don't like it," murmured Chips; but he yielded, as he generally did, and the invitation was accepted (in his hand-writing).

A week later saw them driving up the long avenue at Brantham Hall in the pitch darkness of a winter's evening.

Chip was nervous. On his usually bright face hung a cloud, large and heavy enough to blot out every particle of its customary sunshine. The little hussar was, in fact, very far removed from his normal condition of cheerfulness.

"I'm sure something will happen," he murmured, from the depths of the comfortable brougham which had been sent to meet them.

"What should happen?" quoth Vavasour, who was in the highest spirits. "I say, old chap, try and look a little less like going to a funeral than you did at the station; it's not complimentary to Miss Culliner."

They had reached the door by this time, and as a flood of light shone out upon the darkness, Chips made a valiant effort, and, drawing himself together, actually conjured up the ghost of a smile with which to meet the pompous butler, who received them in the hall, and with whom in his confusion he nearly shook hands.

That individual, however, was too much taken up with his own importance to notice the slip, and, having informed the gentlemen that "the ladies had gone to dress," passed them over to a lesser dignitary to act as pilot to their rooms.

Thence, some time during the next half-hour, our two friends descended to the drawing-room, where they found three ladies already assembled, together with the Rector of the parish, who had been called in to avoid an odd number.

Lady Olivia, rising majestically to receive her guests, thinks she has mistaken the names, and passing over the small fair man in the foreground, who is blushing a deep, very deep pink over face and neck, holds out a hand to his companion, towering tall and self-possessed behind.

"Mr. Vavasour, we are very pleased to see you."

The pink in Chips' cheeks became if possible a shade darker, but Vavasour rose to the occasion.

"I have not that honor," he answered with a very low bow. "Mr. Vavasour was good enough to bring me with him;" and finishing his speech with a surreptitious poke in the back to Chips, the little hussar recovered sufficiently to murmur something about "Oldfield, my great friend," and Lady Olivia, turning to give him greeting, proceeds with her introductions—

"My niece Miss Culliner; Miss Grant; Mr. Baines."

The heiress is tall and dark. Vavasour hated dark women. He watches her sail into dinner on Chip's arm, and thinks the smooth, countless braids of brown hair round that shapely head cannot compare for one minute with the little soft, yellow curls bobbing along by his own shoulder, which they scarcely reach except when Miss Grant's roguish blue eyes are lifted.

She was not shy; and during dinner told him that she hoped he has not put her down as a strong-minded female because her hair is short; for it is the result of a severe illness, and not to follow the so-called fashion.

Whereupon Vavasour declared he preferred short hair, and, thinking it a good opportunity to gain information, asked—

"You are one of Lady Olivia's nieces, too?"

"Oh no!" the curls nodded merrily. "I'm only Miss Culliner's companion. She could not be alone in that great house. What would she do?"

Vavasour decides that whatever may be the heiress's other faults she is generous. Though he could not describe what she had on, yet every glance at the little figure by his side told him that Miss Culliner's companion was well, in fact very well dressed. Not a detail, from head to foot, denoted any lack of money.

He only said, however, "Is the house very large?"

"Very," she replied. "There are such big passages that I'm always getting lost in them. You know, I'm not very big."

This is said with an appealing upward glance of the blue eyes, which made Vavasour feel inclined to tell her he would like to take care of her in that big house. But she continued—

"I always tell Marion' (with a glance across at the heiress) "that she is just the right person for a big house. She's so stately, don't you think so? Now, I never could look dignified!"

"You need not wish yourself to look different," Vavasour answered in a low voice. "But, excuse me, I did not know Miss Culliner's name was Marion. I heard—that is, my friend told me—it was Esme."

A very faint blush came into Miss Grant's cheeks as he first began, but she only laughed.

"We're both Esme, only she hates it, so I call her by her second name. But, now tell me is Mr. Vavasour always so shy?"

For a minute he started. Then, remembering to whom his name belonged for the present, answered—

"What, Chips shy? You wouldn't say so if you knew him."

"Well, he doesn't seem very lively now," retorted Miss Grant. And following the direction of her eyes, Vavasour looked across the table.

She was right. Anything less like the jubilant lover could scarcely be imagined than the happy Chips. Not one of his brother-officers would have recognised their bright mess-companion in the sedate, melancholy gentleman eating his dinner by the side of the heiress. A few spasmodic remarks about the weather was the only conversation wafted across the table to the other two, for Lady Olivia and the Rector were deep in soup-kitchens and coal-clubs.

"Well?" asked Miss Grant.

"I can't say he's looking his best," Vavasour admitted. "But look here, Miss Grant, don't you think it's enough to make a man miserable, being situated as he is?"

"What, by the side of Miss Culliner?" she asked mischievously.

"You know what I mean," he answered, trying to look reproachfully into the blue eyes, and failing utterly. "Isn't it enough to make a man feel a regular brute—I beg your pardon, but there's no other word—to know that he has been brought down for the express purpose of either getting a girl's money, or being the means of her losing it?"

Nothing could be more demure than the way in which Miss Grant looked down at her plate.

"Don't you think it's enough to make a girl feel a regular brute to know that the only way she can give a man back his lawful property is by marrying him, whether she will or no?"

"You're too bad, Miss Grant!" Vavasour laughed in spite of himself. "I can't tell you how horrid I felt—I mean, old Chips felt when he heard it."

She gave one swift, inquiring glance up at him, but he did not notice it, nor the faintest possible smile with which she answered quietly—

"I think Miss Culliner is much more to be pitied. Lady Olivia never took the slightest notice of her till a month ago, when it suddenly struck her that it was a duty to see her niece safely married. So here we came, to see and be seen!"

There was a little ring of bitterness in the voice which made Vavasour look, but he had no time to answer, for Lady Olivia rose, and the gentlemen were left to their wine.

When they joined the ladies again in the drawing-room conversation was of necessity more general, with no chance of any confidences; but Vavasour managed, nevertheless, to get through a very fair amount of flirtation with Miss Grant before bed-time.

He and Chips have a snug hour together in the smoking-room; during which he scolds the latter roundly, and declares that if he cannot behave more naturally he (Vavasour) will throw up the whole thing and go home, an announcement which does not add to the little hussar's chances of a peaceful night.

They are to be very quiet for a week, Lady Olivia told them next morning; "indeed quite a family party" (with a meaning look at Chips, which brings a rosy hue to his fair cheeks), and then the house is to be quite full for a fortnight, to spend Christmas in the old-fashioned way. Meanwhile the young men are at liberty to please themselves; there was hunting twice a week, and they could arrange about shooting with the gamekeeper.

Chips brightened visibly at the sound of hunting, for if there was one thing the little hussar loved better than another, it was a good run across country. He knew a horse, too, when he saw one, and could ride well. Vavasour always declared afterwards that the turning-point of Chip's life was the minute he first saw Miss Culliner on her beautiful bright bay.

Miss Grant rode a lively little Arab, which coquetted about much like its mistress, who, however, had him under perfect control. But Vavasour was forced unwillingly to admit to himself that an ordinary onlooker would unquestionably have given first prize for the "general turn-out" to Miss Culliner.

She was a very fine woman, and her grand, somewhat ponderous figure looked its best in the dark-blue habit which fitted its owner as well as the glossy coat did the thoroughbred she rode.

The meet was the utmost limit Lady Olivia would allow for the young ladies, and Vavasour was not the only one who found the two miles all too short.

Honest Chips felt a qualm of conscious guilt as the two friends rode home after a fair day's sport.

"That's a fine girl, old fellow," he said, following the train of his own thoughts. "I don't half like going on in this way. She's not so bad, and can ride, too!"

"I shall want my wife to do something else besides ride," answered Vavasour lazily.

"Well, Miss Culliner's pretty good all round, I think," began Chips, warming to his subject. "She talks well and——"

"All right, Chips; if you're satisfied, so am I."

And he was. Not for one minute would Vavasour put out a hand to stop the course of events during that week. He had come down determined to let things go their own way; and when it became perfectly natural for Mr. Oldfield and Miss Culliner to be thrown together by the unsuspecting Lady Olivia, he was nothing loth to "put up with" the humble companion.

If the truth is told, the lady did not show much reluctance either. If Miss Grant was pretty, she was also, I must confess, a sad flirt. Lady Olivia—who only saw her in the drawing-room, when, demure as a mouse, Miss Grant would sit down with her work-basket and stitch away as if her life depended upon it—considered her a very "proper person" to be a companion to her niece.

Perhaps she would have thought differently had she seen the blue eyes when Miss Grant sang plaintive old ballads after dinner; or took out luncheon to the gentlemen when they shot over coverts near the house.

It really was a very good thing for all parties that the week was no longer. For Chips having recovered his first confusion, blossomed out into the lively hussar his friends knew so well, and was winning golden opinions from everybody.

Perchance, a certain walk and talk he had had one day in the garden with Miss Grant (when every one believed him away hunting and she writing letters) may have had something to do with it; but who knows?

Fortunately not Vavasour, or it would have added fuel to the fire which was first lighted on that identical evening.

Lady Olivia had been reading out the names of the guests she expected, while they sat round the cozy five-o'clock tea-table after an afternoon's skating; and coming to a certain Sir Richard Wargrove stopped.

"I think you know Sir Richard, my dear?" turning to Miss Culliner.

Vavasour in the act of handing cake to Miss Grant, caught her quick glance across at the heiress; and almost immediately the latter answered—

"Yes, a little. When is he coming?"

"As soon as he can leave home. Is he nice?"

"There's not much in him." It was Miss Grant who answered, and Lady Olivia looked up over her glasses.

"I did not know you knew him," she said stiffly.

"Miss Grant saw him when he was with me, he's very nice, but not particularly clever," put in the heiress hastily. And Lady Olivia, seeing that Miss Grant had once more blushingly subsided into the position befitting her, graciously allowed the subject to be turned by Vavasour, who began asking countless questions about every other person expected.

But the first minute he was free he came to a chair at her side, and, under pretence of holding a skein of wool for her to wind, asked:—

"What is Sir Richard like?"

"Well!"—the blue eyes were kept demurely down, and the little white hands went swiftly to and fro amongst the wool, making Vavasour long to touch them—"I think he has two eyes and a nose, and——"

"Don't you ever talk seriously?" he interrupted roughly, with a sudden jerk of the skein which broke the wool. Whereupon Miss Grant sent him away, saying he was too clumsy; and he departed in high dudgeon to the other end of the room.

"Little flirt," he muttered to himself. "I expect she's had some nonsense with that beastly baronet herself, and doesn't want it found out." Then he began wishing he could go back, but was too proud to make the first step.

After that, the house filled rapidly, and by Christmas Day it was quite full. The obnoxious baronet had not appeared, being detained at home. Chips timidly consulted Vavasour about the desirability of giving Miss Culliner a present.

"They'll expect it, won't they, under the circumstances?" It was wonderful how soon he had learned his part!

"Of course they will," answered Vavasour promptly, and after a long discussion sent Chips away in a state of blissful delight, with repeated assurances that it would in no way hurt his feelings; as a proof of which he sat down immediately to think if he could not manage to give Miss Grant something without offence.

Of course it was nothing to compare with Chip's gorgeous bracelet cunningly ornamented by two horse-shoes interwoven in pearls and diamonds; but Vavasour felt amply repaid on Christmas morning when Miss Grant found the dainty gold locket with its blue forget-me-nots on her plate.

"I don't know how to thank you, Mr. Oldfield, for your lovely present; you shouldn't have wasted your money on me."

This was whispered aside at the breakfast table, in a not too steady voice; and there were tears—yes, actually tears—in the eyes which raised themselves to his. She knew perfectly well that money was not plentiful with him, for in a moment of confidence he had told her exactly what his prospects were, and she had whispered back that her only home was in the old castle with Miss Culliner; which sent him to bed to dream of love in a cottage, and make reckless determinations to marry only for love; in spite of the possibility of the heiress losing all her wealth by taking the wrong man. "And even if that does happen," urged our philosopher, "old Chips has enough for both of them!"

It was hardly possible that so many people could be gathered in one house without wishing for a ball; and Lady Olivia had to submit to having her rooms first dismantled and then decorated according to the tastes of the younger members of the party.

"Sir Richard will be here, to-night," Miss Grant told Vavasour from the bottom of the steps up which she was handing him the last wreath. They were alone, putting the finishing touches to the dancing-room (while every one else was out in the hall), and Vavasour came down from his lofty perch before answering.

"You won't give him the first dance?" he pleaded.

She looked up mischievously. "Do you suppose Sir Richard would ask me before any one else?"

"He would if he——" began Vavasour in a low, passionate voice; but just at that moment Chips bounded in, noisily demanding a hammer, and followed by other workers to help in the search, blissfully unconscious of the scene they were interrupting.

But while he dressed for the ball that evening Vavasour made many excellent resolutions. He no longer disguised from himself the fact that he was foolishly—nay, madly in love with this penniless girl, whose "face was her fortune;" and marry her he would, even if it involved giving up his dearly loved regiment.

"I shall sell out, pay my debts, and settle down comfortably," he determined. "She won't want luxuries, for she said as much. We'll have our fun to-night, and I won't say a word, but to-morrow put my fate to the touch, and the heiress may go and—— be hanged!"

With which charitable conclusion he went downstairs, where the first sight of Miss Grant in her white dress and blue forget-me-nots nearly put his latest determination out of his head. Had they been alone, I think he would have proposed to her then and there.

But if she looked prettier than ever she was also more mischievous. Nothing could persuade her to give Vavasour the first dance.

"I'm not going to move till the second one," she said; and he was obliged to retire with the gloomy determination of never letting her out of his sight till that one came.

He stood against the wall in moody silence, watching her every movement; and she, though talking and helping Lady Olivia, seemed to be watching the door.

Presently Vavasour noticed a tall, fair young man come in, and his hostess's greeting.

"Ah, Sir Richard, better late than never!" Then a few inquiries about his journey in a lower tone, and her voice again became audible. "The people here will be strangers to you, but I believe you know my niece;" and she turned to meet some one else and the baronet passed on.

Was it accidental, or why did Miss Grant cross the doorway at that identical moment? Of course Sir Richard saw her, and equally of course stopped to shake hands. Vavasour could not hear the words, but he saw the girl's face flush brightly while she apparently answered some questions very low; then the baronet gave her his arm, and they walked away together.

That was why she would not dance! Vavasour ground his teeth with rage. His jealous eyes followed them across the room but, contrary to his expectations, instead of joining the valsers, they turned into the conservatory, at the farther end, and were lost to view.

In his first moment of passion he determined to go away and leave the ball; but on second consideration he took a savage delight in revenging himself by making her keep her promise.

"She sha'n't quite make a fool of me," he muttered grimly, as he stalked across the room at the close of the first dance, looking more like an executioner going to justice than a gentleman in search of his partner.

The unfortunate victim did not look at all guilty, sitting laughing on a low ottoman; and the moment she saw Vavasour's cloudy face her love of teasing was roused.

"This is our dance," he began stiffly. "And——"

"Is it?" she asked innocently. "Are you quite sure?"

"Quite. You need not trouble to look, Miss Grant; my memory is very good."

"Really? But I should like to make quite sure," and he had to wait while she went through an elaborate display of finding her programme, and looking it carefully through.

"I think you're right," she said condescendingly; and with a parting nod to Sir Richard, which made Vavasour grind his teeth afresh, she took his arm.

He was too angry to begin the conversation, and they walked in silence into the other room. Miss Grant took a sidelong look at the frowning face above her.

"Do you know, Mr. Oldfield," she said sweetly, "if you look so very cross, I shall be afraid to dance with you!"

"Haven't I reason to look cross?" he asked, relenting, and looking down with an expression Miss Grant found it difficult to meet.

A little flush came into her cheeks, but the next minute she looked up with the most innocent face. "I don't see why you should be cross, I haven't danced at all yet!"

"No, but you waited for that—that man and sat out with him all the time."

"Isn't it natural I should want to talk to an old friend? You are very silly to mind that."

"I know I am;" he answered hastily; "but I mind anything you do."

The flush deepened, even to her neck and brow; and Vavasour could have declared her lips trembled if the voice that answered had not been doubly full of teasing.

"Do you know, Mr. Oldfield, it's not at all becoming to you to frown? It makes you look as ugly as—as your name."

"What's the matter with my name?" He had softened down before, but now fired up again.

"Well," coaxingly, "you can't say it's very pretty, can you, now? Not half so nice as Mr. Vavasour's."

Vavasour bit his lip hard. The temptation to tell her was strong. His eyes wandered unconsciously to Chips, sailing serenely round the room with the heiress; and then he bent down and whispered very low:—

"Perhaps I shall make you like my name some day."

The next minute they were gliding away to the plaintive strains of Venetia, making him feel he could go on thus for ever if he could have the little golden head in close proximity to his own. All the rest of the evening he was blindly, idiotically happy, for Miss Grant was particularly sweet and gracious; and it was well Lady Olivia was too busy to notice how often her niece's companion danced with one gentleman.

Of course the ball was a success. It could hardly fail to be otherwise, with perfect music and floor, supper from Gunter's, and every one determined to dance till dawn.

Yet the four people who came down first on the following morning did not look as if their late dissipation had agreed with them. The heiress's pale cheeks and heavy eyes contrasted strongly with the fitful color in Miss Grant's cheeks, as the two girls made their way to the breakfast-room. Chips, the picture of misery, followed at a distance, but, stopping at the library, shut himself and Vavasour therein, and related his tale of woe.

On the previous evening he had offered his heart and hand to the heiress, and she had refused him. That was bad enough, he averred, but the reason was worse. Vavasour listened to his detailed account of the latter in ominous silence, his face growing paler with every word; but when it was finished he rose, and only saying "I'm very sorry, Chips," led the way to the breakfast-room; the little hussar following in a state of abject doubt as to what his friend's set face might forbode.

Miss Grant's voice was speaking earnestly as they opened the door. "I shall never forgive myself if you do, Marion." But at sight of the two gentlemen she stopped, and, coloring vividly, drew back almost behind the heiress.

Vavasour did not hesitate a moment. He walked straight up to the latter, and with a faint attempt at a smile said very distinctly—

"Chips has been telling me about last night, Miss Grant, and I have come to ask you not to make this miserable business any worse by visiting my sins on his head."

The ex-heiress flushed darkly. "I—I can't," she began brokenly, covering her face with her hands; then recovering herself she raised her head proudly: "I told Mr. ——" ("Oldfield," supplied Vavasour gravely) "my reason last night. I am very, very sorry I ever consented to change places with Miss Culliner; besides which, I am absolutely penniless, and he cannot wish to have a beggar for his wife."

"Excuse me, Miss Grant," replied Vavasour gently, "but your reasons are really none at all. We are much more to blame for having deceived you; and anyhow," he added, with a wintry smile, "if you were really Miss Culliner, you would forfeit your wealth by marrying Chips, so that he would have a poor wife after all!"

She murmured something about its "not being right," but Vavasour suggested they should talk it over in the library, and in an incredibly short space of time they had vanished.

There was an awkward silence as the door closed upon them, which the real Miss Culliner tried to break by poking the fire vigorously.

"It's very cold."

No answer followed this novel remark; and looking up she saw Vavasour's stern face above her.

"You have had your revenge," he said, "and I don't blame you one bit, but I wish it had been delayed a few hours. Last night when I believed you penniless, I determined to sell out, pay my debts, and then offer you a home—humble, it is true, but rich in everything my love could supply."

Miss Culliner kept her eyes well down; because there was more in them than she wished this angry young man to see just yet.

"I don't see why you should be so cross this morning because you see a chance of not giving up your regiment."

He started and then looked down at the bent head, while a hoarse laugh broke from his lips.

"I know you haven't a very high opinion of me," he said bitterly; "but you might acknowledge I'm not quite such an ill-bred cur as to propose to a girl the very minute I knew she has money."

The blue eyes came up then, blazing with righteous indignation.

"You needn't reproach me with my wealth! I always have maintained it was the most unjust will that ever existed; and there was no more harm in my changing place with Miss Grant than in you changing place with Mr. Oldfield!"

"Haven't I said so?" he returned more quietly. "I repeat again, you were fully justified in doing as you pleased. But I only want to make you understand that no power on earth shall induce me to make you the offer this morning which I fully intended doing."

Miss Culliner's lips curled scornfully, albeit they trembled.

"I suppose you think I ought to make it instead? But this isn't Leap year; and," with a sudden burst of anger, "I sha'n't." She walked to the window to hide her tears.

"I never thought anything of the kind," he answered. "I shall go away to-day and never bother you again, and you can marry whom you choose." He strode to the window exactly opposite hers, and stood there looking out.

In about two minutes Miss Culliner dried her eyes, and peeped cautiously round. Did he really mean it, this refractory lover of hers? His back looked very unpromising, but—suppose he did?

I am quite shy at having to relate what followed: but remember, fair readers, if you please, that I have already told you she was a flirt; and, moreover, she was very much in love with him.

Vavasour was just meditating a dignified retreat, when footsteps began tiptoeing across the room from the opposite window. Too proud to turn round, he remained gazing stolidly out at the snow, which perhaps accounted for his not feeling the very light touch on his arm.

It was not repeated; for the hand was withdrawn, and a head substituted in its place. A little soft, yellow head, with a wreath of curls, which leaned against his shoulder; while two blue eyes, with a suspicion of teardrops in them, looked up to plead more eloquently than the red lips.

"Please don't go, Henry."

What could a man do but turn round and take her in his arms to vow that nothing in the world should ever make him leave her again?

Miss Culliner had great difficulty in releasing herself. "Let me go, Henry, I want to tell you something."

"What is it?" He held her out at arm's length, enjoying her confusion. "You little darling! you're the most beautiful creature I ever saw!"

"Don't be silly, sir," she retorted through her blushes. "I wanted to tell you that the reason I waited for Sir Richard last night was because he was the only person who knew me, and I was afraid he'd let out my secret. That's all."

"Is it? I could forgive a hundred Sir Anybodys this morning," began Vavasour fondly; changing into a muttered "Confound it!" as the door opened.

But it was only Chips, with a face like the summer sun, who tried to retreat when he saw what was going on.

"Beg pardon, old fellow; I didn't know ——"

"Come in, Chips; we want your congratulations; and only hope you're as happy as we are?"

"I could not be happier," asserted Chips, whereupon the young ladies kissed each other; and Esme asked, "Did Mr. Oldfield tell you I guessed your secret the first evening you were here?"

"I couldn't help it, Vavasour," began Chips apologetically. "Miss Culliner got it all out of me one day in the garden; and ——"

"You never could keep a secret, Chips," asserted his friend.

"No, that's what made you look so miserable," chimed in Esme merrily. "You were ten times happier after I made you confess!"

And then, of course, every one came pouring in to breakfast; and the lovers had to partake of that very prosaic meal, like ordinary mortals.

* * * * * * *

Lady Olivia could not have been very angry when the truth was explained to her because the Easter violets and primroses were in great request for a very pretty double wedding which took place from her house not three months later.

The only fault pretty Mrs. Vavasour can find with her husband is that he will never confess she had to do all the love-making, and he did—nothing at all.

My Rival.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

I ALWAYS disliked Jack Forrester. We were school-fellows at Eton, and, being nearly of an age, were thrown much together. He was better than I at footba'l, and beat me hollow in the cricket-field; and when I endeavored to revenge myself by getting ahead of him in Horace and Virgil, and worked hard, much against the grain, during a whole term, to achieve that laudable end, I found, much to my disgust that he was still head of the form, and that I was but a bad second.

Before I left Eton I had come to hate him very thoroughly, and was not sorry to be quit of school life.

I was destined for the army, and eventually obtained a commission in the—— Hussars. I had looked forward with considerable pleasure to a military life, for which, I flattered myself, I was peculiarly adapted; but my disgust may be imagined when I discovered that my school rival, Forrester, held a commission in the same regiment, and was already a prime favorite at the mess-table.

He appeared delighted to meet me; but all my old envy and aversion revived on the instant at the sight of him. My brother officers, one and all, sang his praises, and even expected me to join in the laudation. If they had known with what feelings I regarded him, they would have spared me that.

He was stronger, handsomer, had more winning manners, was even richer than I, and for all these things I hated him. Was it fated that he should be forever in my path, inspiring me with feelings for which I despised myself, but which I was yet utterly unable to combat?

It may seem almost incredible that such an apparently trivial cause should have so poisoned my mind; but my temperament was an unfortunate one, and it must be remembered that this was a feeling which had grown up with me since boyhood.

At any rate, it is a fact that I brooded over the subject till life became almost unendurable. I even thought of throwing up my commission; but this my pride would not allow.

At the earliest opportunity I got leave and travelled on the Continent, seeking to forget my troubles for awhile amid fresh scenes and faces.

At Geneva I fell in with the Fentons—old friends of my father's—who were spending the summer there.

The family consisted of Colonel Fenton and his wife and two daughters, both pretty and of nearly the same age. They were charming people, and in their society I spent three of the happiest weeks of my life.

We boated on the beautiful lake, made excursions among the neighboring mountains, and "did" the country to our hearts' content. Edith, the elder, dark and vivacious, I admired immensely; but with Laura her younger sister, blue-eyed, fair-haired, and just nineteen, I fell seriously in love.

The time flew by like a dream. At last the Fentons returned to England, and I, with a heavy sigh, went further afield, and made for Italy. I had always longed to see the classic country, about which I had read so much at school; but when I arrived there I found myself in no mood for enthusiasm.

The olives and vines, the blue skies and magnificent cities of Italy were wasted on me. I scampered through the Peninsula like a veritable Cook's excursionist, and then posted in haste back to England.

To my mind, the only two facts worth considering were, that Laura Fenton existed, and that I was overwhelmingly in love with her.

After my arrival in London I took the earliest opportunity that presented itself of calling on the Fentons. They lived in a pleasant, old-fashioned mansion at Hampstead, and I well remember the feeling of delighted eagerness with which I passed through the lodge gates for the first time. But I had not gone many yards before my state of mind changed to one of an entirely different character.

Surely I was born under an unlucky star for there, standing on the lawn, engaged in easy, laughing conversation with Laura—my Laura—was the very man I hated most in the world, Jack Forrester!

A feeling of despair came over me from the moment I saw him. In all our boyish rivalries I had been invariably worsted, and as a man I had succeeded no better. Could I hope, then, to vanquish him in love?

It was with difficulty that I succeeded in mastering my feelings sufficiently to speak to him with ordinary civility, though he greeted me with his usual disgusting effusiveness.

To my jealous fancy there seemed to be more than a shade of coolness in Laura's welcome of me. How I got through that afternoon I never knew, it was one of prolonged torture.

Forrester's footing in the house seemed to be either that of a privileged friend or of an accepted suitor, and of course I put him down as the latter. When did a jealous lover ever take a cheerful view of his own position?

He was respectfully familiar with the colonel and playfully tender towards the girls. How I detested his playfulness and cursed his tenderness. If we had both been born a hundred years before I should at all hazards have picked a quarrel with him, and settled our difference finally with a pistol bullet.

But in these piping times, one has to smile and be amiable, although mentally on the rack. However, my indignation was all the fiercer for being suppressed; I left the house with a heart burning with envy, hatred and malice, and passed the night in a passion of impotent rage, which, at the present moment, I am almost ashamed to recall.

With the next morning came startling news.

We were ordered to the Soudan, and had to embark almost immediately. There was no time for adieus; indeed, barely enough for the most necessary preparations. For myself this sudden call to arms was a most fortunate thing, and saved me, as I verily believe, from a fit of temporary insanity, or, at least, from an attack of brain fever.

On the voyage out I scarcely spoke to a soul. Forrester, of course, was with the regiment, but I carefully avoided him. My comrades attributed my taciturnity to homesickness, and treated me with consideration; but they were mistaken—it was revenge I was pining for.

All sorts of wild schemes flitted across my mind. I had decided that the world was not wide enough for myself and Jack Forrester. It was necessary to my peace of mind that one or the other of us should leave his bones in Egypt, and although I had very little relish for life under my then circumstances, I decidedly preferred that this contribution to the soil of Africa should be his—not mine.

So wholly absorbed was I by this one idea that I made the passage out in a kind of trance.

It comes back to me now in a series of vague pictures. The huge troop-ship, rising slowly to the tumbling waters of the "Bay;" Gibraltar, a giant sentinel, black against the sunset; Malta, with its steep streets and motley inhabitants; and, at last Egypt, the land of glowing heat and flies and sand and general discomfort.

Hurry and tumult characterised the disembarkation. The streets of Alexandria presented a scene of confusion worse confounded. There were hot and angry officers, a bewildered commissariat, swearing troopers, and a wonderful medley of mules, camels, ammunition wagons, and the [illegible] accompaniments of a modern British campaign.

Amid all this excitement, the worthy Egyptians, to whose rescue we had come, conducted themselves with a placid indifference and Oriental apathy which were to the last degree exasperating.

All things have their appointed end, however, and at last we were on the march. To a man accustomed to the luxuries of civilization, this involved a series of exquisite annoyances. We longed to close with the enemy, and, indeed, were in the mood for him; but this was denied us.

Flying rumors came in as to his whereabouts; he had been seen here—had been heard of there.

We could trust no one. Self-constituted scouts swore to us by Allah, and almost wept over the incredulity of the infidel; deserters staked their hopes of paradise on the accuracy of their information. Nevertheless, we pressed on unheeding, preferring to rely solely upon the intelligence of our own agents.

As I write, one recollection comes back to me with startling vividness. Our detachment halted near some wells, and constructed a rough, entrenched camp. At nightfall I lay down, wearied in body and mind, to rest under my tent, but sleep seemed to desert me.

Vague fancies and half-formed thoughts flitted across my brain; strange noises filled the air and rose from the ground, the insect world was awake and busy. At last, however, thoroughly exhausted, I fell into a heavy slumber.

Something disturbed me, and I, rising impatiently, I crept to the entrance of the tent and looked out.

The scene that met my eyes was solemn and striking in the extreme. Around me lay the sleeping camp, and on every side stretched the illimitable plain of the desert; while in the east a strange glare showed where the spectral dawn was already creeping up into the sky. The air was cool and refreshing, and breathlessly still.

So suddenly the sharp crack of a rifle away to the right broke the stillness of the morning. Another, and nearer; and then the bugles rang through the camp.

The outposts came rushing back in hot haste, the enemy was upon us! Up tumbled our fellows, dishevelled and bewildered, their eyes heavy with sleep, but still ready for their duty. There was scarcely time for the men to seize their arms and rush to their ramparts, when on three sides of the camp we saw rushing towards us a cloud of dust, from out of which the first level beams of the sun seemed to strike sparks of fire. It was a nervous moment. As I stood by my horse with the rest of our troop in the centre of the square, I saw many a young soldier, his finger quivering on the trigger, look round impatiently for the word of command.

In the centre, with a face which might have been marble for firmness and steadiness, stood our grizzled old chief. Nearer and nearer came that threatening dust-cloud, with a swiftness and impetuosity which seemed irresistible.

"Fire!"

At the word, a vivid belt of flame flashed round the camp, and then followed the heavy, close, continuous roll of the musketry.

Twice, with incredible and fanatic courage, the gallant Arabs charged against that iron hail. Some few even reached the ramparts, to be impaled on our bayonets; but then the horde broke and fled. Mortal man could not stand up against such an awful and telling fire.

It was our turn after that. "Charge!" was the word, and, with a jingling of spurs and flashing of swords, we swept out like a whirlwind among the flying Mussulmans, cutting them down right and left.

In front of me, as I looked round, I saw a small group of mounted Arabs flying fast on their swift little horses. Among them was a tall, powerful man, apparently an emir, who bore aloft on a lance-staff the green banner of the prophet. His weight handicapped his horse heavily, and caused him to lag somewhat behind the others.

All at once it flashed across my mind that here was an opportunity of distinguishing myself, and at the same time of cutting out Forrester.

But, stay! Where was Forrester? In the hurry of the moment I had had no time to notice his whereabouts. Still, I was in advance of the rest, and he could not be near. With a half-smile at my folly I glanced behind me. By Heaven! he was near—not fifty-yards off—and apparently bent on the same errand as myself!

With a fierce oath I plunged my spurs into my animal's sides and pressed him on at his topmost speed. The Arab chief saw that escape was impossible, and checking his horse, swung round in the saddle to meet me.

In a moment I was upon him and grasped the staff of the banner, but as I lifted my sabre to strike, my horse stumbled heavily and jerked the weapon from my hand.

My savage adversary saw his opportunity and swung his sword aloft with a fierce yell. I clung desperately to the banner and felt for my revolver, but there was no time to draw it.

I saw his swarthy, sinewy arm naked against the sky, and the sharp steel whistled through the air; but just as it flashed upon the downward stroke I was hurled on one side as if by a thunderbolt. Another rider had dashed between my adversary and myself.

The shock unhorsed me, and for awhile I lay stunned on the ground. When I regained my feet, dizzy and shaken, the Arabs were mere specks in the distance, and our men were scattered far and wide in pursuit.

A few paces off, gaunt and grim in death, lay the body of the sheik; while almost at my feet, ghastly pale, with the blood oozing from a terrible wound in his head, lay Jack Forrester.

As I looked at him a mist seemed to pass from my mind—a veil to fall from my eyes. This was the man whom I had wronged and hated all my life—the man who had just risked his life for me.

Trembling with apprehension, I knelt by his side and tried blindly to revive him with some brandy from my flask. In a few seconds he opened his eyes, and, recognising me, seemed faintly. I could just catch the mutter of words

"Forgive me, Frank! I did it to save you!"

* * * * * * *

Thank Heaven, he did not die; his fine constitution pulled him through; but brain fever set in, and for a time he lay at death's door.

I myself was shortly afterwards seized with dysentery and rendered unfit for further service, and we were invalided home together.

As we sat smoking on deck one beautiful starlight night—for we were fast friends now—Jack said, solemnly—

"We ought to be thankful, Frank, that we are alive and homeward-bound when so many better fellows have gone to their last berth out yonder. Grey is down, I hear, and poor little Doddridge."

I assented, and we smoked on in silence again, thinking of many an old friend and good comrade who lay sleeping their last sleep among those sandy wastes.

"Jack," said I to him, after awhile, "do you know that there have been times when I have felt like a murderer towards you?"

Forrester laughed.

"I always knew you disliked me," he answered; "and it used to puzzle me a good deal. I set it down at last to instinctive antipathy. It was singular, too, for I always had a fancy for you."

"I think it began when you clean bowled me for two duck's eggs in the cricket-field."

"Shouldn't wonder, it was hard luck, and might have riled a saint. But, thank goodness, that's done with now, and we'll forget all about it. The land of Pharaoh has, at least, cleared up that little mystification."

It was in keeping with Jack's hearty, genial nature to wish to let bygones be bygones. The better I knew him the more I admired his unselfish and generous disposition, and the more ashamed I became of my former unreasoning jealousy.

There was one point, however, of vital importance to myself, which I felt that I must clear up. Was he engaged to Laura Fenton? It is true I was almost sure of it, and was prepared to bear my punishment when it came without a murmur; but I was sufficiently familiar with him now to ask him point-blank, and I did so.

Jack stared, and flushed at the question, and then burst into a heartly laugh.

"By Jove! so you thought I was going to cut you out there as well as in the flag-staff business. Set your mind at rest, my dear boy. I am engaged to [illegible], and between ourselves, old fellow, I think that the fair Laura has more than a little liking for your [illegible].

I wrung his hand in silence; I could not speak. What a miserable, blind, jealous idiot I had been, and how narrowly had I missed offering up love, friendship, happiness, and all my hopes in life upon the wretched altar of a diseased and unworthy vanity.

Well, I was happier than I deserved to be, for, shortly afterwards, Laura became my wife; and at the present moment I have no dearer friend in the world than my old rival of the playground and the schoolroom—Jack Forrester.

FISH THAT WALK AND CLIMB.—Of all land-frequenting fish, the most famous is the climbing fish of India, which not only walks out of the water, but also mounts into trees by means of sharp spines situated near its head and tail. It has a peculiar breathing apparatus, which enables it to extract oxygen from the water, which is stored up within a small chamber near its gills for use while on land.

The Indian snake-head accommodates himself to the season, when the pond which he inhabits is entirely dry, by storing enough water in his special chamber to moisten his gills during that trying time. He can thus remain for a long period in a dormant condition, buried within the dry bed of the pond. Old residents of India say that these fish will survive for many years in a state of suspended animation, and that when ponds, which have been dry for several successive seasons are suddenly filled by heavy rains, they are found to be swarming at once with full-grown snake-heads.

In countries where the ponds regularly dry up, at certain seasons, the fish, and especially eels, inhabiting them either lie dormant in the mud, or make their way overland to fresh sheets of water. To keep their gills wet during these excursions, they distend the skin on each side of the head, and fill the pouch thus formed with water.

SHE LIKED QUIET.—A gentleman passing a boiler shop the other day when every employe was at work hammering on boilers found an intelligent-looking lady seated in a corner of the shop working a cluster of clover blossoms on a velvet ground. She wore a peaceful smile, and seemed wholly unconscious of the terrible din that filled the building.

"Doesn't the pounding disturb you?" inquired the gentleman, stooping over the lady and shouting in her ears that he might be heard.

"Oh, no," she replied, smilingly.

"Do you enjoy it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you often come here?"

"Regularly three times a week."

"I don't see what there is about a boiler shop to attract a person that often."

"Well, you see, my physician says I must avoid anything that will affect my nerves, and as at this hour, three days in a week, the young lady who lives in the other part of our house takes her music lesson, I come down here, where it is comparatively quiet."

THE QUEEN OF SPAIN'S CHAIR.—This is a hill directly north of Gibraltar. The tradition is that Dona Leonora de Guzman, mother of Enrique II., accompanied Alfonso XI., to the siege of Gibraltar in 1340, and ascending the hill in question, solemnly vowed that she would never descend until the standard of Castile floated above the keep.

The Moorish defence was so stubborn that the Spaniards were compelled to abandon the attempt to seize the fortress. The question then was how to extricate the lady from the consequences of her rash vow, for she dare not break it. A cavalier soon hit upon a successful solution of the difficulty. Knowing the gallantry of the Moorish governor, he sent him word of the trouble, and the courteous Moslem, immediately procured and hoisted the gorgeous Castilian flag in full view of the distressed group. This enabled the proud beauty to retire gracefully without any loss of honor.

ABOUT FLIES.—The particular office of flies appears to be the consumption of those dead and minute animals whose decaying myriads would otherwise poison the air. It was a remark of Linnæus that three flies would consume a dead horse sooner than a lion could. He doubtless included the families of the three flies. A single fly will sometimes produce 20,000 larvæ, each of which in a few days may be the parent of another 20,000; and thus the descendants of three flies would soon devour an animal much larger than a horse. A writer gives the following computation: "One fly on the 20th of March is represented by 300 on the 25th of April; by 300 times 300—equalling 90,000—on the 28th of May; by 27,000,000 on the 2nd of July; and by 8,100,000,000 on the 8th of August."

There are as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

"Thrift among children" is what no doubt sounds strange. But it is a fact that, in France, thrift among children has, since [illegible] inculcated and developed to no small extent. Over twenty-three thousand School Savings Banks have been opened numbering, in January, no less than [illegible] depositors, with deposits amounting in the aggregate, formed of the *bona fide* pocket-money of children, to £2,000,000.

According to a decision arrived at during a conference of French lawyers held lately at the Palais de Justice, in Paris, a husband [illegible] entitled in opening letters addressed [illegible] That such a question should have presented itself for decision by such a tribunal speaks almost as unpromisingly for the happiness of domestic life in the "gay city" as do the plots of the vast majority of modern French plays. It matters much whether the decision be morally right; but it may safely be predicted that the French lawyers will soon be called upon to decide the counter-question whether a woman is justified in opening letters addressed to her husband.

The Mississippi is a good instance of the variations through which some names have passed. Its original spelling, and the nearest approach to the Algonquin word, "the father of the waters," is Mecee Sebee, a spelling still commonly used by the Louisiana Creoles. Tonti suggested Micha Sepe, which is somewhat nearer to the present spelling. Father Laval still further modernized it into Michispi, which another Father, Labatt, softened into Msisipi, the first specimen of the present spelling. The only changes since have been to overload the word with consonants. Marquette added the first and some other explorer the second "s," making it Missisipi, and so it remains in France to this day, with only one "p." The man who added the other has never been discovered, but he must have been an American, for at the time of the purchase of Louisiana the name was generally spelled in the colony with a single "p."

[illegible] The French language was introduced into England by the Norman conquest [illegible] From the two languages which were [illegible] found in the [illegible] Saxon and the French, it has usually been said that a mixed language was formed—the English. This assertion is very inexact, from the morphological point of view. French, after the conquest, became the language of the court and of justice, while it entered into the popular language only as to its vocabulary; but there it made a deep impression. Of the 44,000 words in the English language as they occur in the dictionary, more than 20,000 are of Roman origin, while only 13,000 or 14,000 are of Germanic origin, or Anglo Saxon.

It is wonderful how little minutiæ affect great deeds. We came across a funny story as told by Randall, the man who wrote the large biography of Jefferson, which shows how the signing of the Declaration of Independence was hastened. Says he: "While the question of Independence was before Congress it had its meeting near a livery stable. The members were short breeches [illegible] handkerchief [illegible] seemed to enjoy it very [illegible] give credit to the influence of the flies. He told it with much glee, and seemed to retain a vivid recollection of an attack from which the only relief was signing the paper and flying from the scene."

The Queen-Regent of Spain is probably the most over-worked woman in her dominions. She rises at 7, and as soon as she has made her toilet she sends for her little son and the members of the [illegible] spends an hour or so with them. [illegible] attends to her household affairs, goes over the accounts, gives her orders for the day, reads her letters, glances through the newspapers and is ready by 10 or a little [illegible] to receive the report of the Captain [illegible] of the garrison. He is succeeded [illegible] Minister with [illegible] view with the Queen on affairs of [illegible] every day but Monday, when she presides at a Cabinet Council instead. At 12 the [illegible] sit down to dinner, at which [illegible] At 2 one of the [illegible] himself with the despatches [illegible] of different kinds [illegible] once a week she [illegible] only over her [illegible] the next day she takes a drive without an escort or any other show of state. After dinner the royal party amuse themselves with cards or talk literature and art, and at 11 the Queen retires to seek the rest to which she is so well entitled after her fatiguing day's work.

THE juice of half a lemon in a glass of water, without sugar, will frequently cure a sick headache.

Our Young Folks.

DORA'S FRIEND.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

"COME, Dora, the trap is at the door. Why, my child, what is this? What has happened?"

"Oh, mamma,"—and a tearful face was raised from the cushions upon which Dora had thrown herself—"I had a dreadful dream last night, and—and—I've felt like crying all day long, only I didn't want you to see it, and so I tried hard to keep up."

"Why, darling, don't you know dreams go by contraries? So dry your eyes, and I will help you on with your things while you tell me about it."

"But, mamma, it was so awful. You know it's about time for Clinton to sail, and I thought he had been shipwrecked, and I saw him struggling in the waves, and I saw him go down—down—and he—oh, I can't tell it!"

In spite of herself, Mrs. Holmes's cheeks blanched as she listened; but with a decided, "do not give way to such folly, Dora," she bathed her daughter's face with rose-water, and put on her heavy fur-lined wraps.

Then she enveloped her head in a soft fleece of knitted wool, whose delicate pink made the sweet face, with its fair, rose-tinted complexion, look even more lovely as she kissed it and said—

"There, Dora, run on, and tell John to call for any schoolmate you would like to have accompany you. I have an engagement with Mrs. Maxwell, so I cannot share your drive."

"May I call for Annie, mamma?" said Dora, timidly.

A sudden cloud crossed the handsome, haughty face, which but the moment before had worn such a tender, loving expression.

It was followed by an instant of indecision, then a glance at Dora's tear-stained face caused her to say—

"Well, Dora, Annie's no favorite of mine, but if it will banish your unaccountable fancies, go for her."

"Thanks, mamma; and I'll crush in all her little brothers and sisters, and try and forget my worry in listening to their talk."

"You are an odd little thing, Dora. One wouldn't think you were a child of mine unless they knew. I never saw the time that I'd be willing to drive through the streets with a trap full of shabby looking children."

Dora did not consider the Grahames a bit shabby, but she was too wise to say so, and thus no unkind feeling was left in her mother's mind towards her, only a half-vexed, half-admiring thought at her queer ideas, ending, as all such criticisms invariably did, with a memory of the face which had been the lovelight of her youth, and of which Annie's was a softened counterpart.

That dear face was no longer near to smile upon her, and so it happened that for the sake of her dead husband she was as wax in the hands of his child, although naturally of an unbending, imperious nature herself, and little prone to do things which would create comment in her "set."

Many admiring glances were turned towards the handsome turn-out, and only one sweet-faced maiden for an occupant, as the high-mettled horses came dashing through the streets.

But that was soon changed, and when the carriage reached, looks of surprise, changing rapidly to smiles greeted the merry group and youngsters in passing, not knowing in what way to show their great appreciation of such a "jolly racket," mixed great soft snowballs, and threw them into their midst, causing even more uproarious fun and jollity.

Then they reached the broad, solitary country road, and Dora and Annie settled themselves down for a good talk together; and so deep was the interest which invested their chosen topic—Dora's brother, Clinton—that they were for awhile oblivious to all other sounds as well as sights.

The time had not long gone by when the Grahames had been in different circumstances, and had lived near the Holmes's handsome residence.

It was then that the girls' intimacy had commenced, and Dora had become fondly attached to Annie. That would have been well enough, but when Clinton Holmes began to devote himself to the gentle girl, and even after Mr. Graham's failure, had declared to his mother that he meant to marry Annie when he grew to be a man, the mother's desire to have her only son make a far different match caused her at once to conclude to part with him for awhile, and send him to a foreign university, there to be educated.

By that time all danger of having Annie for a daughter-in-law would surely be over. For how could she, growing up without advantages such as wealth alone can bestow, continue to attract a young man who had seen the world, and had been thrown into the society of the beautiful and high-born maidens who were its ornaments?

Thus reasoning she rested content, and put no barrier between Dora's friendship for Annie.

"But now Clinton would soon be home, and the intimacy must come to an end," was the thought in her mind.

Some hours later Dora left the little Grahames at their door, and bore Annie off in triumph for the evening, with a parting injunction from Mrs. Grahame not to keep her late.

The two girls ascended the steps, rosy from their ride, and with such beaming, happy faces that the servant who opened the door in answer to their ring, hesitated to give the message she had been directed to give to Dora the moment she returned home.

But Dora needed but one glance at the girl's face to tell her that something was wrong.

"What is it, Susan? Tell me quickly! Is mamma ill?" she exclaimed with a frightened look.

"No, Miss Dora, your mamma is not ill; but it's worse. She wants you in her own room."

"Oh, Annie! What shall I do? My knees are shaking under me. I can never get up those long steps alone."

And Dora began to sob hysterically.

"I will help you, dear. Put your arm around me—there, that way—and we'll go up together."

So, half-carrying, half-assisting Dora to mount the long flight, she at last succeeded in reaching the landing with her; a few more steps found them within Mrs. Holmes's boudoir.

It was the first time Annie had ever been within the room, as only Mrs. Holmes's most intimate friends ever received an invitation to enter its charmed precincts, and had it not been for the exciting scene that followed, Annie would have enjoyed looking around it, for it was luxuriously furnished, and full of valuable articles disposed in rare old cabinets about the room.

The walls, too, were covered with fine pictures. But all was forgotten but a sympathy so keen as to be positive pain, as Mrs. Holmes tottered forward to meet them.

"Oh, Dora, your dream was true," she said, with her wild eyes fixed upon a telegram, towards which her trembling hand pointed. "Read, read it aloud and see if I may not have made a mistake."

Dora took the telegram and read it through. Then, without a word she fell white and fainting into Annie's supporting arms.

"It is so! Clinton is drowned! We shall never see him again! I knew it!" exclaimed the agonized mother.

"No, Mrs. Holmes," said Annie, who had looked over the telegram with a face as white as Dora's, but without for an instant losing the control of herself; "it does not mean that. As I understand it there is a chance of some of the survivors being saved."

"But think of it! To go down among all these cruel rocks! Oh, that I should live to see this day! My noble boy! And it was I, your own mother, who sent you to your death!"

Then she turned suddenly towards Annie.

"I cannot stand inaction at such a time as this. I must go at once to the shipping office, and see if there is a bulletin there that—that——I cannot stop to go into particulars," with sudden vehemence. "Will you promise me to stay with Dora until I come back? Dora loves you and she will not miss me so much."

There was an unconscious pathos in the voice of the stricken woman, and in her pleading look, which went straight to Annie's heart.

She had never been drawn to Mrs. Holmes, probably upon the principle that "like begets like," and Annie had always been conscious of an indefinable something which had heretofore repelled her; but now all barriers melted before her pity, and she laid Dora upon the couch, and, with tender, caressing touch, was smoothing Mrs. Holmes's hair, and petting her much as though she had been her own mother.

"I will do anything you wish me to, my dear Mrs. Holmes. 'Tell me where they are, and I'll get your hat and cloak and help you to put them on."

She had been accustomed to perform the like tender offices for her own mother, and it now came like second nature to her to do the same for Dora's.

"You are a good girl," said Mrs. Holmes, as at last she finished her kind ministrations, "and I want you to keep up Dora's hopes as you have mine. It is a blessing for the child that she does not fully realize what is going on," for Dora was still in a half-unconscious state, although low moans escaped her lips, "and it is best that I should leave her before she is fully herself, or I might not be able to tear myself away, and I must, or I shall certainly lose my mind."

Then pressing a kiss upon Dora's tear-wet face, she hastened from the room.

Heartrending scenes met her at the shipping office, until one after another received word of the friend for whom they were anxious, and went away, either rejoicing or sorrowful, to their homes.

Still no word came of Clinton, and at last, giving up all hope that he had been rescued when the ship went down upon which he had written them that he was to take passage, Mrs. Clinton left Dora to return home.

Mother and daughter were once again to meet face to face—the only two left of the family.

Annie's sensitive yet self-controlled nature again was called in play to comfort and console her darling Dora, and the mother whom she had learned to regard so affectionately of late.

Forgetting all those future plans, she devoted herself to her friends during the weary time of distress [illegible] and Mrs. Holmes's return; and when at last convalescence followed, with what a tender thrill at her heart did Annie hear the feeble voice call her her "second daughter."

A few days after, the invalid put out her pale hand, and drew Annie's head down so that she could whisper in her ear words which at once filled her heart with pain and also with a solemn kind of joy.

"I sent Clinton away because he loved you as a little girl, and I did not want him to marry you when he grew up. Now I am punished for my selfishness by losing him, and also by not having a single claim upon your love, which has grown so very precious to me that I dread to make this confession. But you must know the truth, then you can judge me accordingly."

"I love you as dearly as though you were my mother, Mrs. Holmes, for—for"—and here her voice dropped, and the pale face flushed slightly—"I loved your son all my life, and shall be true to his memory until my death."

"Oh, Annie!—oh, mamma! I've come to tell you——"

"But I am before you! I won the race, Miss Dora! I'm here myself. Why, what is all this about? Why, Dora, has mother been ill?"

Dora had sunk down exhausted with running. She had dreaded the effect of the sudden surprise upon her mother, and in her own delight and confusion, had not thought to stop her brother's progress by telling him of Mrs. Holmes's feeble state, but had tried to reach her mother's room first, and prepare her for Clinton's appearance.

As might have been expected, his long strides had held their own against Dora's excited run. But joy seldom kills.

After the first happy greeting was over Mrs. Holmes drew Annie forward.

"I have two daughters now, Clinton," she said.

With a sudden light upon his face, Clinton encircled Annie within his arms, and said—

"May I not give my mother a more lasting right to call you 'daughter,' Annie? You were my first love, and I have never for an instant wavered from it."

And Annie answered with a smile and a blush—

"Your mother knows my answer already. We were talking about you just the moment before you came in."

"And what did Annie say, mother," asked Clinton, eagerly.

"That she had loved you in life, and would be true to you in death!"

"God bless my Annie," was the fervent response.

So once again the family were reunited. Clinton had been picked up by a passing vessel that had been bound for a port in Australia, and by that means his name had failed to be among the published lists of the saved.

His telegram had been miscarried, and that was why he had reached home unheralded and unexpected.

ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD.

BY PIPKIN.

"WHERE are you going to, Betty, with your toy-horse and your whip?" asked a lady of little Betty Atkins one day.

"Please, ma'am, I'm a-goin to the market to sell my horse, as little Tom is ill and wants some beef tea."

"Where is the market, Betty?" asked the lady with a kind smile. "Where can you sell your horse?"

"In the town, ma'am; in the big glass place where they sell the horses and carts—and if they sell them they'll buy them, I s'pose?"

"I am afraid not, Betty, child. You do not understand. People in the bazaar will not buy your horse again. Let me purchase it."

"Perhaps you can't. It will cost a great deal," said the child, who was very anxious. "Mother said—I heard her—that Tom ought to have gravy beef, and father said, 'how am I to get money for gravy beef? Why don't you ask the Lord for the money?' as if any one would, ma'am," added Betty, "it's only father's way."

Mrs. Mansell knew "father's way" quite well, and thought he had some rather cruel ways at times. He was poor, and felt his poverty.

But she was touched by the self devotion of little Betty, who was called "stupid," because she was not very quick with her lessons.

The child had had this horse and whip given to her at a school-treat, and now she was on her way into the town to sell it at the toy-shop in the bazaar.

She had put on her Sunday clothes, and looked a clean, tidy, but rather a queer child, as she walked along the lane.

"It will cost a great deal, will it?" said Mrs. Mansell. "How much?"

"Teacher said it was a horse 'worth its weight in gold,'" replied the child simply. "I do not know how heavy it is. Is it a pound, ma'am?"

"It might weigh a pound, Betty, but I am sure it only cost a couple of dimes."

"Dimes!" cried Betty—"Dimes! They're not gold! Then why did the teacher say so?"

Mrs. Mansell could hardly explain the phrase used by the teacher. It is a common expression, but Betty took it quite literally—quite as a truth. So when the beef was wanted, she wished to get a pound in gold for her dear horse.

She looked quite disappointed when Mrs. Mansell told her she would not receive anything at the toy-shop. The horse was sold, and the person in the shop would not buy it again at any price.

Then Betty, forgetting her cloth petticoats, began to cry. Poor child, she was very simple in the ways of the world, and not clever.

But Betty had a kind heart, and you see was quite ready to part with her treasure, "worth its weight in gold," in order to provide gravy beef for her sick brother.

Mrs. Mansell did not know what to do. She could not give the child a gold coin; she did not feel justified in doing so; her own means were not large. She therefore said—

"Come with me, Betty, and we will see what Mr. Muley will give us; perhaps he will weigh the horse on his scales."

Mr. Muley was the butcher; he had a very grand shop, in which many poor sheep were hanging, and oxen were cut up on the great blocks; legs of mutton were dangling from the ceiling on hooks.

Mr. Muley was such a kind-hearted man to his customers that (he declared) he often let them have meat at a less price than it had cost him.

Betty knew this, and thought he was just the very man to buy her horse, and the whip too. So she dried her eyes, and walked along with Mrs. Mansell to Mr. Muley's shop, where he let people have meat at less than its cost price. Kind Mr. Muley.

The butcher's shop was full of customers, and Mrs. Mansell had to wait, for she did not want to let every one in the town know about the beef.

When the people were clearing off, Mr. Muley came up and said—

"Well, ma'am, what can I do for you? Get out you, child! Who wants you here? Be off, I tell you!"

Betty shrank back, but Mrs. Mansell said—

"Betty, stay with me. Mr. Muley, will you please tell me how much that toy weighs, and let me have the same weight of gravy beef for this child."

The butcher stared at the lady. "Certainly," he said. He then put the toy in the scales and weighed it. "Just one pound and one ounce," he said, putting it on the desk, near which Betty was standing, looking at Mrs. Muley counting money. Oh, so much money!

Mrs. Muley kindly wrapped the toy in paper, and the butcher put the beef in a tiny basket. Mrs. Mansell paid the little bill, and sent Betty home, where her mother kissed her, and blessed her, and was devoutly thankful to Mrs. Mansell.

But a terrible trial was in store. The butcher soon came up, and accused Betty of stealing a dollar.

In vain she protested. The butcher had seen her close by the counter watching the money; he said he would send for a policeman. Mrs. Muley was sure the money had been paid, and was near her when Betty was in the shop. So the child with the horse all wrapped in paper, was brought back to the town.

[illegible] Poor Mrs. Mansell was very much vexed, and Mrs. Muley [illegible]. But the money had disappeared. Where had it gone to?

"It was here," said the butcher. "And Mrs. Muley wrapped up the parcel—the toy."

"Perhaps it is in the paper," said Mrs. Mansell.

They opened the paper. No; the money was not in the paper, but as Mrs. Muley turned the toy-horse over, there was the money, sticking to the wood between the wheels! It had been put on the greasy scales, and the coin had stuck fast to the horse.

Every one was pleased. Mrs. Muley gave the child the money; the policeman walked away. Mr. Muley said he knew she had it somewhere—for he was an obstinate man—and Mrs. Mansell was pleased.

So Betty got her gravy beef, and something besides, although it seemed very unlikely that she would ever have either.

You see that things happen for us in the best way in this world, though they sometimes look very much the opposite.

HUMAN EVIDENCE.—The following illustration of the unreliability of human evidence is commended both to complainants and to impatient critics of those who cautiously investigate complaints:—

When Von Ranke, the great historian, was [illegible] at an advanced age, began to collect facts for his history, a small bridge gave way, and some passengers fell into the water present below. He was present and on his return the next day he inquired into the particulars of the accident.

"I saw the bridge fall," said one. "A heavy wain had just passed over it, and weakened it. Two women were on it when it fell, and a soldier on a white horse."

"I saw it fall," declared another, "but the wain had passed over it two hours previous. The foot passengers were children, and the rider was a civilian on a black horse."

"Now," said Von Ranke, "if it is impossible to learn the truth about an accident which happened at broad noonday only twenty-four hours ago, how can I declare any fact to be certain which is shrouded in the darkness of ten centuries?"

"Come in, my poor man," said a benevolent lady to a ragged tramp, "and I will get you something to eat."

"Thanky, mum; don't care if I do."

"I suppose," continued the lady, setting a good meal before him, "your life has been full of trials?"

"Yis, mum; an' the wust of it wuz I allus [illegible]."

A POSTMASTER at Cope, Ind., has resigned, but the rush for the succession is not likely to be great. His salary amounted to 5 cents less than half a dollar for the month of March.

WITHOUT A WORD.

BY RITA.

They wandered through a shady lane
  Where beech and maple met above,
And in that sweetly rustic fane
  The breeze was eloquent of love.
Love whispered in each trembling spray,
  And in the carol of each bird,
Yet he and she passed on their way,
  That summer eve, without a word.

Upon her cheek the roses gleamed
  In crimson glory; and a light
Of strange unearthly beauty beamed
  From eyes that were as beacons bright.
His face a simple truth expressed;
  Yet not in anger or disdain
Did silence brood within the breast
  Of these who walked the shady lane.

Beside the door they stay their feet,
  Where moon and stars are in eclipse,
And there Love's story they repeat,
  Though not a word escapes their lips.
The gossip-bird that spreads the news,
  Says, in amazement, "How absurd!
I listened well no sound to lose,
  And know he left without a word!"

Without a word? Ah, sweeter bliss
  Than ever language had conveyed
Was in the lingering lover kiss
  He gave to this most precious maid.
A wondrous glow suffused her cheek,
  Her heart to deepest depths was stirred,
Yet, powerless to think or speak,
  She closed the door without a word!

Ah, every heart that feels Love's power
  Must now and then a moment reach,
In a supremely golden hour,
  When silence far surpasses speech.
For in this mute, mysterious way
  Life's choicest blessings are conferred,
And hearts to other hearts convey
  Love's messages—without a word.

ABOUT THE CAT.

Cats, in the abstract, might well exclaim with Shylock, "Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe." They nevertheless have numerous estimable qualities, from which little credit is derived. They are devoted mothers as a rule, guarding their young at the risk of life itself; facing opponents on their behalf from which, by nature, they would fly in abject terror; playing juvenile games, even at an advanced age, to amuse their kittens; keeping them sleek and glossy as satin, while patiently teaching those accomplishments that they will need when left to their unaided resources in after-life. A pattern for the imitation of too many parents.

Notwithstanding such creditable traits of character, kittens are mercilessly destroyed; though some of all other progeny are spared, out of consideration for maternal affection and well-being. A cat is vulgarly said to have "nine lives;" but, in sober truth, the single existence it can lay claim to is seldom open to envy.

Without entering here upon details of many cruelties almost too barbarous for belief, it cannot be ignored that boys, and even men, not otherwise supposed to be utterly devoid of common humanity, think nothing of allowing this most unoffending animal to be deliberately tortured to death by dogs, or similarly revolting practices. They appear to be under a delusion that there is something manly in expressing detestation of cats, while professing fondness for animals in general, and choosing for pets very uninviting specimens.

Sundry so called "sports"—save the mark!—are now happily illegal; offenders in brutality towards cats are rarely convicted; and—under the present imperfect state of the law for the protection of dumb animals—can then be only very inadequately punished.

Cats are tolerably popular in stables, where they are able to render good return for their lodging at little cost for board. They become greatly attached to horses, their favorite sleeping-place being frequently a horse's back; a strange selection, which yet appears to be mutually agreeable. It has been widely said that cats are incapable of any great degree of affection, and that the small amount evinced is for their home, and not its inmates. They are, in addition, considered unable to learn tricks and actions which make dogs such amusing companions. It is also thought to be much more difficult to cure the former of faults and natural aversions. Too great reliance may, however, be placed on these assertions. A bad name is easily acquired when champions are few and little intimacy is allowed. "Leading the life of a cat and dog," for instance, is popularly supposed to represent the reverse of harmony; yet some cats and dogs—which have not been made enemies—become devoted friends, affording an illustration of peaceful unanimity that many of their biped detractors might profitably imitate.

Again, cats, though they have a decided instinct for killing birds, have been taught to abstain from molesting those in cages. Two cases came under the writer's notice where cats were left constantly in places filled with birds, yet never injured any, having been early impressed by the idea that there are birds and birds, some species requiring even protection from harm.

The home of one conscientious creature was at a bird-fancier's shop, and no breach of faith resulted from the watch-man's being left nightly on guard. The experiment might be hazardous to quote, but other examples could be mentioned. A few well-authenticated anecdotes may clear away some mistaken notions, and tend to the saving of helpless animals from cruelty and neglect.

A military chaplain, when living with his family at a post had a favorite cat. Having to change his residence, he removed to another side of the city, a distance of several miles. The in-coming tenant's wife took a great fancy to the cat, and begged that it might be transferred with the house. Through fear that it would be lost in going so far from familiar haunts, added to the knowledge that a good home would be given, and, more especially, because poor Puss was then in delicate health, she was, after much hesitation, allowed to remain. About three weeks afterwards, the chaplain's wife sitting in the drawing-room of her new home, was amazed to see their old friend enter the veranda, spring into her lap, overwhelming her with caresses, and showing every possible demonstration of delight at their reunion. It was assumed that she had, in an unaccountable manner, come to take up her quarters where an unequivocal welcome was received. Towards evening, the visitor disappeared, as mysteriously as she had arrived, returning the following day, but this time not alone, for in her mouth was a very small kitten, which she gently laid at the feet of her mistress with a pleading and most eloquent expression, as though craving for sanctuary.

It need hardly be said that both refugees were incorporated into the household. Upon inquiry, it was ascertained that one kitten only had been spared out of a family born at the former residence. With this "sole daughter of her house and heart," the faithful creature had travelled to those she had "loved and lost a while."

How such a journey could have been thrice accomplished, through the intricate and wholly unknown streets of a large and populous city bringing on the last occasion so young a kitten safely with her, surmounting all the difficulties and dangers of such a formidable transit, is inexplicable, and must certainly be deemed a marvellous feat.

Grains of Gold.

Perseverance is the best school for virtue.

There is nothing more daring than ignorance.

Expense of time is the most costly of all expenses.

Each succeeding day is the scholar of that which preceded.

Trust that man in nothing who has not a conscience in everything.

Do your business promptly, and bore not a business man with long visits.

Never fail to take a receipt for money paid, and keep copies of your letters.

The passion of acquiring riches in order to support a vain expense corrupts the purest souls.

Joy descends gently upon us like the evening dew, and does not patter down like a hail-storm.

Judge thyself with a judgment of sincerity, and thou will judge others with a judgment of charity.

The great source of pleasure is variety. Uniformity must tire at last, though it be uniformity of excellence.

No man was ever so completely skilled in the conduct of life as not to receive new information from age and experience.

Cowards have done good and kind actions; cowards have even fought—nay, sometimes even conquered; but a coward never forgave.

Little joys refresh us constantly, like house-bread, and never bring disgust; and great ones, like sugar-bread, briefly, and then satiety.

Age is not to be feared; the older a good and healthy person grows, the greater becomes his capacity to enjoy the deeper, sweeter, and more noble kinds of happiness which the world affords.

Femininities.

There are 60,000 women farmers in Ireland.

A woman is never insincere when she is angry.

The conquering woman is the concurring woman.

The proper study of womankind is man's pocket-book.

Train agents say women rarely buy comic papers.

For nose bleeding bathe the face and neck with cold water.

Jet-trimmed reception dresses weigh from 10 to 50 pounds each.

Dry flannels applied as hot as possible will relieve neuralgia.

Less than 200,000 of the 125,000,000 heathen women of India can read.

Women are ever in extremes; they are either better or worse than men.

A New York woman has sent cards to her friends announcing her divorce.

A Newburg, N. Y., maiden chewed too much gum and lost control of her jaw.

Cranberry jelly mixed with cold water makes a refreshing drink for the sick.

A man usually hugs a delusion when he gets his arms around a fashionable girl.

There is a lady in New York who makes a living by whistling in drawing rooms.

A Rochester baby has been born with two tongues. Feminine gender, of course.

Whiting or ammonia in the water is preferable to soap for cleaning windows or paint.

That was wholesome advice given to a daughter: Laugh with everybody, but at no one.

Silence is golden, but a woman is perfectly willing to take somebody else's word for it.

A woman is never so anxious to acknowledge man's superiority as when her lead pencil gets dull.

Neatness is a good thing for a girl, and if she does not learn it when she is young she never will.

Female performers first took the female parts in plays during the reign of King Charles the Second.

About the only time woman sees any beautiful member of her sex is when she is looking in a mirror.

A woman in Ohio eats nothing but pie. She has not tasted meat, bread or vegetables for sixteen years.

A brilliant black varnish for iron stoves and fireplaces is made by stirring ivory-black into ordinary shellac varnish.

Washing the hands twice a day with corn meal and rubbing on a little glycerine at night, will keep them nice and soft.

Bent whalebones can be restored and used again by simply soaking in water for a few hours and then drying them.

It is estimated that 7,000 young women earn their living as governesses in private English families, with salaries of $100 a year.

Miss Ethel Dickens, granddaughter of Charles Dickens, has started a type-writing office for the copying of parts and prompt books.

In the "flowery land" of China the petals of the magnolia are converted into fritters, which are said to be very agreeable to the taste.

Here are the names of a family in McDuffie county, Ga.: Lenty Edney, Adney Delney, Elkey Hetney, Malchy Edney and Zebedee Redley.

"Is it a crime to be a woman?" asks Lillie Blake. It is not a crime, Lillie; but being a woman when you don't want to be is certainly a great misfortune.

A carelessly kept coffee-pot will impart a rank flavor to the strongest infusion of the best Java. Wash the coffee-pot thoroughly every day and dry well.

In kitchen-French, "entree" means a small dish, usually served between the courses at dinner; "fondue," a light preparation of melted cheese; "fondant," sugar boiled and beaten to a creamy paste.

The Turks are remarkably fond of coffee; they flavor it with cloves or essence of ambergris; and so essential do they deem it to their comfort, that it is one of the necessaries with which a Turk is obliged to furnish his wife.

She was a healthy soprano, and at the concert sang, "Oh for the wings of a dove," yet an hour later, at supper, she took the wings, tail-piece, drumsticks and most of the breast of the turkey, and then passed her plate for "more stuffing."

A Boston paper tells of a clergyman of that city who, while being shaved, was captivated by the face of a young lady who happened to look in at the barber-shop window. He hurried his toilet, rushed out, overtook the girl, made up to her, succeeded in making a good impression, and married her in less than a month.

"It doesn't seem possible!" "What's that, my dear?" "Why, Mr. Hayter, the statistician, says that all the people in the world could stand in a field ten miles square." "Well, they couldn't." "But, hubby, Mr. Hayter says so." "I don't care if he does. You don't suppose that a woman could stand in a crowd like that, do you?" "Why not?" "Because nobody could see her clothes!"

Armand: "Come, fly with me, I implore you!" Camille: "Never, sir; you insult me." Armand: "What! You will not go?" Camille: "I will resist you with all the strength of my woman's nature. If you would tear me from this place, you must first drug me and render me unconscious. You will find a bottle of chloroform on the table over there."

Masculinities.

Bismarck often reads for hours in bed.

Shun equally a sombre air and vivacious sallies.

Gilt buttons will not be permissible on a white vest.

Men's judgments sway on that side fortune leans.

Governor Green, of New Jersey, is a graceful dancer.

I have no sympathy for an 8 hour man with a 14-hour wife.

"Silence is golden"—if one does not examine it too closely.

Let ladies pass through a door first, standing aside for them.

Sprains and bruises call for an application of the tincture of arnica.

The Sultan of Turkey has 484 wives, but their mothers do not live with them.

Some people are too proud to beg and too honest to steal, and so they run into debt.

In the drawing room stand till every lady in the room is seated, also older people.

There are men in this world too lazy to catch snails. They prefer living on near relatives and friends.

The Prince of Wales' baldness is increasing, and now only a few hairs still sadly linger on the top of his cranium.

An Italian in Boston is growing rich by making plaster casts of the ladies' feet and leaving out the corns and bunions.

If you want knowledge, you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it; and if pleasure, you must toil for it. Toil is law.

A Connecticut man is suing to have his name removed from the tombstone of his deceased wife, from whom he was divorced years ago.

There is a rich man in the Black Hills, a Western paper says, who dates the beginning of his fortune from the day when he first sold his wife for $4,000.

A military gentleman was asked by a young lady if he liked music. He replied: "Yes; to tell the truth, I am fond of almost any kind of noise."

"I wonder why Scribe wears his hair long. Is it because he is eccentric?" "No; he wears it long because it would cost 25 cents to have it trimmed."

Every man's experience of to-day is that he was a fool yesterday and the day before yesterday. To-morrow he will most likely be of exactly the same opinion.

An editor who has reached the advanced age of 90 attributes his long life and excellent health to the fact that he never expected to please everybody and never tried to do so.

Stephen A. Douglas, the son of the "Little Giant," who used to be very intemperate, has now become a total abstainer and has made speeches in temperance meetings.

He (tenderly): "And what do you think of the engagement ring I sent to you, Jennie?" She, delightedly: "Oh, it is beautiful—in fact, the handsomest one I ever had given me."

I would be proud of nothing that is uncertain. Haman was so because he was admitted alone to Queen Esther's banquet; and the distinction raised him—but it was fifty cubits higher than he ever dreamed or thought of.

A man who can give up dreaming and go to his daily realities, who can control his heart, its love or woe, and take to the hard work of his hand, who defies fate, and if he must die, dies fighting to the last—that man is life's best hero.

Concerning chance there is not, perhaps, so much wit as pure wisdom in the story of the poor man who, after watching a thousand years before the gates of Paradise, slept for a moment, and, waking, found that they had opened and shut.

A beggar in Spain is a gentleman and you must address him always in formal and courteous language. "Brother," you say, when he importunes you, "may God put it into your heart to deprive me of the pleasure of your company."

All our strong feelings rule, like spirits, until a certain hour; and if a man were to say to himself, "This passion, this sorrow, this pain, this rapture will in three days have surely vanished from my soul," he would ever be more at rest and calmer.

A man's education, in whatever department of life, is his permanent capital. It is the surest investment which can be made for future dividends, as it never can be lost, except by sickness or death, and is never burdened with taxes or insurance.

At a school examination in Avoca, Iowa, the question, "What are the chief products of the United States?" was asked, the answer to be submitted in writing. One of the scholars, a very honest boy, submitted the following answer in good faith: "Presidents, Governors and Congressmen."

They tell in Buffalo of a faithful workman engaged in extra dangerous work, who injured his hand very severely. As the surgeon was attending to him the foreman hurried in and said: "Sam, what time was it when you got hurt?" "About 4 o'clock. Why do you ask?" "So I may know when to dock you."

A novel competition has been tried at one of the principal junctions of a great English railway, prizes being offered to switchmen and brakemen for moving, coupling and uncoupling cars. The idea might be extended by offering prizes to railway employees for door slamming and unintelligibility in calling out the names of stations.

"James," said a grocer to a new boy, "what have you been doing in the back room so long?" "I was a-pickin' the dead flies out of the dried currants, sir," replied James. "You were?" replied the grocer, with much disgust; "an' your father told me he thought you were born for the grocery business. You had better study for the ministry, James."

Recent Book Issues.

The series of "Interstate Readers"—Primary, Intermediate and Grammar—published by the Interstate Publishing Co., Boston, are splendidly adapted for reading purposes in schools of the different grades. They are tastefully fresh in matter, and otherwise most available.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

Cassell's Family Magazine for May most admirably fills the favorite place that this monthly has taken in the home circle. There is much of practical value in the household, the London and Paris fashion letters, short stories, interesting illustrated articles, among them one that will be especially attractive, "How the Queen Travels," made more so by the fine illustrations. The serials have taking instalments, and there is plenty of good poetry and handsome pictures. Cassell & Co., New York.

St. Nicholas for May opens with a beautiful frontispiece illustration, by Blum, to "Catarina of Venice," the "Historic Girl" whose romantic history is related by E. S. Brooks; while Nora Perry, in "An Only Daughter," tells of a very modern and unhistoric girl, whose story is, however, none the less interesting on that account. Gen. Adam Badeau tells the story of "Sherman's March to the Sea," profusely illustrated. "Winning a Commission" is a three-part story of life at West Point. There is another collection of dog stories, and another poem about the "Brownies," written and illustrated by Palmer Cox. Among the many other attractions in this number are a complete story by Rose Hawthorne Lathrop; a sketch of "A Rainy Day in Central Park," illustrated; poems and prose articles unlimited. The illustrations, as usual, are furnished by the best artists.—The Century Company, New York.

The May number of *Lippincott's Magazine* opens with a complete novel by Capt. Charles King, U. S. A., entitled "The Deserter." It is bright, vivacious, full of dash and vigor, and its plot is of unusual interest. Mrs. Poultney Bigelow, contributes a tale called "The Madisons' Butler." J. S. of Dale has a pleasant little satire—"The Fable of the Poet and the Tarpin-Hauler." Henry Chadwick discusses "The New Rules of Base Ball;" and A. E. Watrous relates "Some Experiences of a Reporter." An article of exceptional interest to women is that on "Social Life at Vassar," by L. R. Smith, an undergraduate now taking the course. The series of undergraduate essays on social life at our principal colleges, of which this is the second, is exciting wide-spread interest. The poetry of the number is contributed by May Riley Smith and F. D. Stickney. The Monthly Gossip and Book-Talk are readable as ever.

THE GERMAN HOUSEWIFE.—In the richest German household the mistress superintends the kitchen and lends a hand to the cook. There are dishes which she always makes with her own hands, because her Fritz likes them so. She may boast thirty-two quarterings on her escutcheon and be very proud of her lineage, but she has no nonsensical ideas about its being degrading to put on a canvas apron, lard a piece of veal, make jams, or dole out with her own hands prunes that are to be put into the potato stew. She keeps her best attire for Sundays, and makes it serve on many of these festal days, for she does not follow fashion blindly or in a hurry. On ordinary days she dresses with a plainness that would excite the contempt of a French woman; but then her culinary pursuits do not prevent her from being by far the intellectual equal of her French or Belgian sister. She reads serious books that she may be able to converse as an equal with her well-taught sons; she practises music that she may remain on a level with her daughters, who are trained to be brilliant pianists; and she finds time to read the newspaper, in order that she may understand what her Fritz has to say about the topics of the day.

PREVENTING CONSUMPTION.—In a certain hospital a physician was convinced that some of the patients were hacking much more than was necessary or safe. He therefore, by the promise of rewards and punishments, induced them simply to hold their breath when tempted to cough. In a little time he was surprised himself to see how some of them recovered entirely from the disease. Let a person when tempted to cough draw in a full breath and hold it until it warms and soothes every air cell, and they will soon receive benefit from the process. The nitrogen which is thus occasionally retained acts as an anodyne to the irritated mucous membrane, thus allaying the desire to cough, and giving the throat and lungs a chance to heal.

THE meanest three men in Georgia are thus described by a paper there: "One of them will not drink as much water as he wants unless it be from another man's well or branch. The second forbids any of his family from writing anything but a 'small hand,' as it is a waste of ink to make large letters. The third stops his clock at night in order to save the wear and tear on the machinery. All of them decline to take their county paper on the ground that it is a terrible strain on their spectacles to read newspapers, even in the daytime."

WIFE: "John, dear, shall we get a light or heavy tombstone to put on mother's grave?" Husband, with suspicious emphasis. "Heavy as possible."

ON THE BRIGHTER SIDE.

There is a humorous side to everything, not even excepting that most awful of nature's manifestations, an earthquake; and those who see it are not as a rule those who take the least serious views of life. At such times though there seems but little room to laugh many odd accidents happen to cause it.

People's idiosyncrasies will exhibit themselves, even at such awful crises as these, in an amusing manner. At the late Charleston earthquake, an old gentleman, the whole side of whose house had fallen in, escaped with his family to the garden, where they camped all night. In the morning he disappeared for about an hour, returning 'spick and span and self-possessed.' He had made his way into the house, taken his usual morning bath amidst the wreck of his household gods, dressed himself carefully in clean clothes, and informed his anxious family that he found the earthquake 'very exciting,' and meant to stay and see it out. We should have liked to shake hands with that fine old specimen of humanity, whom the earthquake itself was powerless to shake out of the habits of a gentleman.

An old lady, whom the shock surprised in bed, rushed out of the house in frantic terror to her friends, who were crouching among the fig-trees in the garden. She carried her stockings and other habiliments with her, but had taken time to put on her cap!

A merchant in Albany, whose dreams had probably often been of burglars, was disrobing for the night, when a sudden clattering of dishes in the china-closet made him think the robbers were at their work. Pistol in hand, and closely followed by his better-half, he crept cautiously towards the scene of disturbance, when the bed began to move violently.

'He is under the bed!' screamed the wife; on which the valorous merchant, in nowise daunted, prepared to expel the intruder or perish in the attempt.

But other pieces of furniture began now to join in the unearthly dance; and this multiplication of invisible burglars proving too much for the worthy merchant, he rushed incontinently, with his partner, from the house—to discover that it was an earthquake he had been hunting with his pistol.

A certain hotel-keeper, awakened by the shock, and ever on the alert for the welfare of his guests, shouted out some forcible injunctions to a porter, who, as he thought, was dragging a traveller's trunks over the floor with unnecessary violence. But the earthquake grimly intent upon his own business, paid no heed to the objurgation.

A bar-keeper—with what grounds it would be uncharitable to surmise—suddenly experiencing a sensation as of drunkenness, clung to his bar counter, while suspended lamps swung east and west before his sight, and houses swayed to and fro like trees in a storm. Whatever that bar-keeper's condition may have been before, the shock of the discovery that it was an earthquake to which these supposed imaginary disturbances were due, must effectually have sobered him.

There were few who shared in the aforementioned old gentleman's enjoyment of the new sensation of an earthquake. People who were 'raised in bed' find little comfort in sleeping on the grass even under the shelter of a tent.

One man, who had evidently supped his full of horrors, took the liberty of declaring that he was 'about sick of the earthquake, and guessed everyone had enough of it;' while another, more enterprising, remarked that nothing but a good tidal wave was wanting "to make the thing complete."

THE DINING-ROOM.—A close observer, if not a too wise one, finds fault with a common ornament of dining-rooms. "Do you know I enjoyed the decorations of the dining-room? Oh, yes! There was nothing original about them. They were the same old dining-room pieces that one sees in all dining-rooms of all hotels, and many homes; but I was pleased to see them. Right at my elbow was a panel that was the very soul of appropriate suggestiveness for a dining-room. It was a painting of a string of dead fish. Nothing can be more appetizing in a dining-room than a string of dead fish. Another panel held up to view some dead birds, hanging heads down. One bird seemed to have been shot out of season, and one appeared to have starved to death in a trap. As I looked at them, I thought how I would enjoy the duck when it came on. Then, in another panel, hung two dead rabbits; they had been dead a long time, too, for I had seen them hanging in places where people eat ever since I was a boy. I do admire these game-pieces on dining-room panels. I think, however, an interior of a slaughter-house, under full sail, should be added. And for a cosy breakfast-room, why not a plaque representing some very tender spring chickens, just crawling out of their thin shells? The genius who first thought of painting dead fish and dead rabbits for dining room pieces has not carried his 'fish and rabbit stall' ideas quite to completion."

A CLAIM for damages having been brought by relatives against a company of lynchers for having hanged a murderer, in Aurora, Ind., their attorney has brought forward the plea that "Watkin's whole natural life was forfeited and due to the State of Indiana, and no other person under heaven than the State had any legal estate, right, or title in or to the same, and the same was of no pecuniary value in law to his wife or children."

HARD TO ANSWER.—A contemporary has been offering prizes for questions most difficult to reply to. Here are a few of those that were sent in to compete:

What is the name of the oldest inhabitant of China?

How many paving stones are there in Philadelphia?

How many tom-cats are there within a four-mile radius?

Kindly give the total number of clerks in debt, and who are liable at any moment to be summoned before a judge.

Please tell me the depth in the deepest place of the sand in the great Sahara Desert.

How many panes of glass are there in the windows in the whole of this city?

Who was William the Conquerer's first bootmaker?

How many honest men are there in New York?

What was the price charged for the first glass of ale publicly sold by the first licensed victualler granted a license in England?

The name of the first man who four thousand five hundred years B. C. built his own canoe and paddled it?

How many persons named "Smith" have been born in the world since 1718?

How many milestones are there on the Road to Ruin?

Where do all the pins go to?

Are there any shell-fish at the source of the Congo?

Who made the first shirt?

How often had Julius Cæsar the toothache?

How may I effectually convince any woman against her will when I know beyond doubt that my opinion is correct?

How many inches does the Emperor of China measure round the chest?

What is the superficial area of Cleveland's collar?

The following were considered the most difficult to answer:

What country in Europe, as far as it is possible to ascertain, has passed or enacted the greatest number of laws from January, A. D., 886, to January, A. D., 1886?

What is the exact number of times that the word "the" occurs in all the books in the Congressional Library?

IN JAPAN.—Japanese young men of fashion visit the girls just as they do in Europe, and take them out to restaurants and treat them. They have balls and parties, where waltzing is freely indulged in. The waltz, however, is a recent innovation, but is liked by the Japanese exceedingly. The costumes of the ladies in Japan are more in consonance with the dress reform movement than those of European ladies. First of all, no corset is worn. The long silk sash supplies the place of steel and whalebone. The sash is wrapped round and round the waist loosely, and the ends hang down behind.

There is no large, elaborate bow pinned against the back, like those seen in the representation of the "Mikado" on our stage. Some of the ultra-fashionable girls of Tokio, however, have adopted a method of making their waist look smaller, according to the European modes, but no corset is used—simply a belt buckled round the waist. Japanese girls attire themselves in pretty much the same under-wear as European women, but their stockings are built more on the order of a mitten for the hand, there being a separate receptacle for the big toe. A very curious fact gleaned was this: The Japanese think that all Americans have very old types of faces.

MERCY.—My uncle Toby was a man patient of injuries; not from want of courage, where just occasions presented, or called it forth. I know no man under whose arm I would sooner have taken shelter. Nor did this arise from any insensibility or obtuseness of his intellectual parts; he was of a peaceful, placid nature, no jarring element in it, all was mixed up so kindly within him; my uncle Toby had scarce a heart to retaliate upon a fly. Go, says he, one day at dinner, to an overgrown one which had buzzed about his nose and tormented him cruelly all dinner time, and which, after infinite attempts, he had caught at last—as it flew by him; I'll not hurt thee, says my uncle Toby, rising from his chair, and going across the room, with the fly in his hand; I'll not hurt a hair of thy head. Go, says he, lifting up the sash, and opening his hand as he spoke, to let it escape; go, poor devil—get thee gone, why should I hurt thee? This world surely is wide enough to hold both thee and me. This is to severe parents and governors instead of a whole volume upon the subject.

TRISTRAM SHANDY.

HOW INDIANS CATCH EAGLES.—Among the Indians, the most highly prized articles of adornment are eagle feathers. They are not only used for making head-dresses and ornamenting blankets, but as money for the purchase of fire-water, tobacco, and other necessaries of Indian life. Among the Blackfeet the mode of catching eagles is interesting. After holding an eagle-dance, the "braves" repair to the mountains, where each digs a pit and covers it lightly with reeds and grass. A piece of tough buffalo meat done up in a wolf-skin is laid on the pit. After the sun is risen, the eagle swoops down, alighting on the wolf-skin, which he begins to tear. The Indian, who is concealed in the pit, reaches out stealthily, seizes the bird by its legs, and drags it into the pit, where he crushes its breast with his knees. The return of a successful party is the occasion of great rejoicing, and the plumage of the bird of liberty graces the top-knot of a greasy Indian.

R. R. R. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

In from one to twenty minutes never fails to relieve PAIN with one thorough application. No matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease may suffer, RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will afford instant ease. It instantly relieves and soon cures

Rheumatism,	**Neuralgia,**
Coughs,	**Colds,**
Cold in the Head,	**Sore Throat,**
Asthma,	**Bronchitis,**
Pneumonia,	**Sciatica,**
Headache,	**Inflammations.**
Toothache,	**Congestion.**

DIFFICULT BREATHING

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs. It was the first and is the only

PAIN REMEDY

That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or organs by one application.

INTERNALLY, a half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency and all internal pains.

Malaria in its Various Forms Cured and Prevented.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious and other Fevers (aided by RADWAY'S PILLS) so quick as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

R. R. R. not only cures the patient seized with Malaria, but if people exposed to the malarial poison will, every morning take from 20 to 30 drops of Ready Relief in water and eat, say a cracker, before going out, they will prevent attacks.

Price, 50 cts. per Bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT

—THE—

GREAT BLOOD PURIFIER.

For the Cure of all Chronic Diseases.

Chronic Rheumatism, Scrofulous Complaints, &c., Glandular Swelling, Hacking Dry Cough, Cancerous Affections, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, Water Brash, White Swellings, Tumors, Pimples, Blotches, Eruptions of the Face, Ulcers, Hip Disease, Gout, Dropsy, Rickets, Salt Rheum, Bronchitis, Consumption, Diabetes, Kidney, Bladder, Liver Complaint.

The wonderful cures effected by the Sarsaparillian Resolvent of Kidney, Bladder, Ovarian and Urinary Diseases, its marvelous power in dissolving stone and calculous concretions, curing gravel, gleet and discharges from the genital glands; its powers over the kidneys in establishing a healthy secretion of urine, curing Diabetes, Inflammation or Irritation of the Bladder, Albuminous or Brick Dust Deposits, White Sand, etc., establishes its character as A GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL REMEDY.

Sold by all druggists. $1 a bottle.

RADWAY'S PILLS,

The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy,

For the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

Purgation made perfect by Dr. Radway's Pills. Uniformity and Safety of Action Secured. Perfect Digestion will be accomplished by taking one of Radway's Pills every morning, about 30 o'clock, as a dinner pill. By so doing

SICK HEADACHE,

Dyspepsia, Foul Stomach, Biliousness will be avoided and the food that is eaten contribute its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

☞Observe the following symptoms resulting from Disease of the Digestive Organs: Constipation, Inward Piles, Fulness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fulness or weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering of the Heart, Choking or Suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Chest, Limbs and Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above named disorders.

PRICE 25 CTS. PER BOX. Sold by all druggists.

Send a letter stamp to DR. RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren street, New York. ☞Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.—Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S and see that the name "RADWAY" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

HARMONY AND DISCORD.

BEFORE MARRIAGE.

She sings a beautiful soprano
Most every night,
And plays the upright grand piano
To his delight.

Beside the instrument he lingers,
Admiring sees
The lovely maiden's fairy fingers
Flash o'er the keys.

He thinks such happiness he never
Before enjoyed;
What bliss to linger there forever—
Bliss unalloyed!

AFTER MARRIAGE.

What banging on the grand piano!
Well, I'll be blessed!
You think that you can sing soprano!
Give us a rest!

Perhaps you think your voice delicious?
'Tis, goodness knows!
You'd better go and wash your dishes,
And darn your hose.

You think that you're a player, maybe?
You are, no doubt!
Come and mind your squalling baby;
I'm going out!

—S. T. OLEN.

Coats of arms—Sleeves.

The balance of trade—Scales.

Table of contents—The dinner table.

He takes life easy—The quack doctor.

The best illustrated paper out—A bank-note.

Hanging is too good for a painting that is badly executed.

An Irishman explained that a short sleep did for him, because when he slept he "paid attintion to 'L.'"

You can't convince a young man whose best girl has just said "Yes" that the country is going to wreck and ruin.

When did General George Washington have his first ride in a public carriage?—When he took a hack at the cherry tree.

It is remarkable how much more religious a person can be in a well-fitting dress and a love of a bonnet than in a lot of dowdy old duds.

At mountain resort: "And is the air healthy here?" "Excellent, sir, excellent! One can become a centenarian here in a little while."

How to make a long winter pass quickly—Discount your note in November payable in May without having any certain prospect of meeting it.

It has been found that a lobster produces 40,000 young per year. The man who supposed that a lobster had nothing to do but gad around on the beach was sadly mistaken.

Small boy, entering shop: "I want a pennyworth of canary seed." Shopman, who knows the boy: "Is it for your mother?" Small boy, contemptuously: "Naw; it's for the bird."

Mrs. De Hobson: "What a lovely prayer-book, Mrs. Toogood! Is it a present from your husband?" Mrs. Toogood: "Oh, no! I won it at the progressive euchre party at Deacon Longface's last week."

A man saw advertised "A sure cure for drunkenness." He forwarded the necessary amount and received by return post, written on a postal card, in beautiful violet ink, the magic words, "Don't drink."

Commercial traveler, who has made an unsuccessful offer of marriage to a young lady: "Madam, since you are determined not to honor me with your hand, would you favor me with a small order?"

"They say fortune knocks once at every man's door," said an old pauper, "but if it ever came to mine I didn't hear it." "Why not?" "I guess I must have been in the saloon around the corner."

Chicago young lady, at dinner in Boston: "May I trouble you to pass the potatoes, Mr. Waldo?" Mr. Waldo: "Oh, certainly! No trouble at all, I assure you." Chicago young lady: "Never mind the dish, Mr. Waldo. Just stab one with your fork."

"You despised Mr. Slimmington, and yet you married him?" "Yes; you see I got so tired of having him hanging around me every evening that I had to get rid of him some way; so I married him; and now, of course, he spends his evenings at the club."

He, to Pittsburg heiress: "Do you know Miss Wandergrift, whose father is reported to be so very rich?" She, glass and pig iron: "Oh, no, indeed! The Wandergrifts do not belong to our set at all! They are so new, you know! Their money comes from natural gas."

Small boy: "I picked up a dollar in the road to-day, pa." Fond father: "And you restored it to the owner, of course?" Small boy: "Yes, sir." Father: "That's a good, honest boy." Boy, conscience stricken: "Well, pa, you see I couldn't very well help it. The man had me by the ear."

"What's the matter with you and Popydyruk, Cadley?" "Well, he's the most aggwavating chap I know, don't chew know! He comes in the pool-woom and, begad! he pwoceeds to whistle the only bloomed tune I know. A fellow has no chawnce whatevaw with such a cad as that."

"Now, young lady, you may take the stand," said the lawyer in a case in the justice's court the other day. "Yes, sir," she replied, with a beautiful smile. "That does me up," whispered a man on one of the benches; "I'm her husband and she's 40 years old, but the sugar on that lawyer's tongue will cost me thirty dollars for millinery before the 1st of June."

WHAT IS A BILLION?—A billion is a million times a million. Perhaps you can count 160 or 170 in a minute—nay, supposing you could even count 200 in a minute. Then, in one hour, you could count 12,000 if you were not interrupted. Well, 12,000 an hour would be 288,000 a day; and a year, or 365 days, would produce 105,120,000. But this would not allow you a single moment for sleep, or for any other business whatsoever. If Adam, at the beginning of his existence, had begun to count, had continued to count, and were counting still, he would not even now, according to the usually supposed age of man, have counted nearly enough. For to count a billion he would require 9,512 years, 34 days, 5 hours, and 20 minutes, according to the above reckoning. But suppose that we were to allow the poor counter twelve hours, daily for rest, eating and sleeping, he would need 19,024 years, 98 days, 10 hours, and 40 minutes to count a billion!

WHEN a diplomatist was asked to give an ambassador a few hints as to the conduct of diplomatic intercourse, he answered quietly, "Take snuff and stand with your back to the window." "Why?" asked his interlocutor. "It is simple enough," was the reply. "With your back to the light, the expression of your features is less visible; and, if you take snuff, every convenient pinch affords you time to think over your replies."

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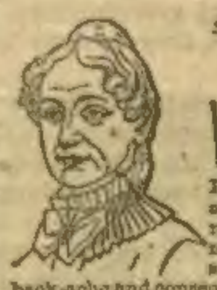

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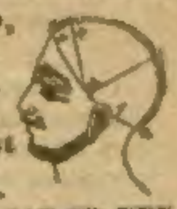

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Latest Fashion Phases.

An appeal to the leading tailors elicits the assurance that both stripes and cross-bars will be in demand this season, and the increasing desire for the latter is producing them under several new aspects.

Many are shown in vicuna, soft in texture and light in weight. These display loose hairs upon a surface of large broken plaids in mixtures of black and white and neutral tints, as well as in some of the new shades of ecorce and heliotrope.

Chess-board squares are to be found upon others, with a bright satin divisional cross-bar, in tones of beurre frais and leaden grays.

A more notable novelty, and one which could only be achieved by the setting up of new looms, is to be found in the diamond reversible cloth. In this manufacture an obvious difficulty to effective draping is overcome.

Those who are experienced in the costumier's art know full well that when, for the sake of appearance, a material has to be used upon the bias instead of the straight, a strain or pull in an undesired direction is frequently the result.

It is the triumph of this new tissue to present a diamond framed in diagonal lines, running the straight way of the material.

The cloth, a species of tweed, which is also reversible and shot, allows the color showing the diamond upon one side to offer the stripe upon the other, and vice versa.

In the lozenges of 2-inch proportions the colorings are seen in distinctness, on those presented in smaller size shading is produced by an interlining.

The mixtures are much varied. Navy blue and white, admiralty blue and mordore, tan and chocolate, ecorce of one shade crossed by another in a deeper or paler, and occasionally with white, offer scope for choice.

Combinations of this nature are already to be met with as inserted waistcoats to some smart little coats, and are also in readiness for skirt draperies.

As folds and pleats diminish upon the latter, more color and variety are becoming apparent on the surface of the fabric in which draperies are represented.

Occasionally long draperies are broken by a kilting on one side, and a handsomely braided revers on the other, with that portion of the bodice suggestive of decoration, trimmed to correspond.

An instance of this is to be found in a costume shown in a deep shade of heliotrope, having the revers of both skirt and bodice, as well as cuffs and collar, finely and richly braided in black.

In several models one long ample drapery is carried completely over the foundation, and caught up into a butterfly bow at the back, while an almost imperceptible kilting prevents the edge of the skirt from falling in at the feet. Examples occur in which such drapery is finished with a band of braid instead of rows of stitching.

A costume lately supplied to a leader of fashion, which had its mordore surface flecked with gold, showed a braid of the former color carried as a bordering at the edge of the drapery, and supplied to do similar service on the bodice.

The collar of the latter was folded back at the throat, to fasten with a single button over the linen shirt, which is now bidding fair to replace the waistcoat.

It is becoming usual to supply shirts in dozens and half-dozens with such costumes as demand their presence. The models shown suggest occasionally the starched fronts of the manly garment, fastening in front with tiny studs, and assuming at the back a habit-shirt form.

In others they present pleatings and folds held in place by a band at the waist, and are finished with tiny bows, that looks neat, at the throat.

Another novelty of the season endows the jacket bodice with a front cut like the dress-coat of a man, and allows the open space to be filled either by a waistcoat or shirt.

Habit-bodices are, however, still in vogue, and are frequently made with revers, which leave a richly braided waistcoat apparent.

In those double-breasted bodices which close with a single lappel the latter is generally supplied in velvet, and has collar and cuffs to correspond.

A successful combination of a polonaise and mantle has resulted in the new Ascot cloak. The back view presents the latter moulded to the waist, from whence, with a double box-pleat, it falls to the edge of the skirt.

In front, long wings, lined with silk, and falling unrestrainedly from the shoulders to the feet, disclose, when thrown back, a closely-fitting polonaise of graceful form; while, by means of straps, they do duty as sleeves.

A curtailment, which lets the under part of this garment end in a long pointed bodice, and clips the wings into the dimensions of an epaulette cape, results in a short, smart wrap.

This, as well as the more ample specimen, will probably be seen in plush, as well as tweed, performing the service for which it is designed.

Wide Philippe sleeves are apparent on many dolman-shaped mantles, while upon others, of plush, the sleeve only ends at the edge of the skirt.

Broad stripes or ribs are a feature in the latest make of a covert coat, while to some of the close-fitting over-jackets is imparted the appearance of a waistcoat by means of a second front, which is made loose. The elaborate braiding often seen down the centre is usually apparent likewise on the outside pocket.

A few models have a simple fern leaf, or other device, shown as a breastplate, with duplicates on the shoulders, cuffs and centre of back.

Women of ample proportions like this braiding put on as flatly as possible, while those who desire it can obtain increase of width by letting the braid be upstanding.

Flannels in stripes of blue, gray and pink; cloth in pure white, and vicuna in a shade of old rose, are among the fabrics now being converted by this firm into costumes for fashionable bridal trousseaux.

Many of the waistcoats have narrow cross-barred lines in blue and red upon white surfaces of either wool or linen, and the short bodices with which they are worn are supplied with lappels like a man's coat, to button across the chest; the waistcoat is apparent at the neck as well as below the waist. Many riding habits are at present being made in this style.

Other costumes, due entirely to small checked cloth, close with a single revers of velvet on the right side, which terminates with four large buttons below the waist, and has cuffs and collar to correspond.

Gray cover coats of tweeds are suggesting variety to those of drab, which were so prevalent last season. They, like the latter, are strap-seamed, and finished at the cuffs with rows of stitching.

A gray beige costume recently made, has the drapery caught up a little on one side of the front, and then allowed to fall like a cornucopia, lined with white satin, and the same effect, with the addition of a frilled edge, is given to one side of the bodice. Resting on the long falling pleats of the back drapery are the points with which the bodice terminates below the waist, turned over towards the front, and faced with white satin.

A large plaid, in which lines of red, blue, yellow and green, are toned down into harmony on a ground of neutral tint, performs the service of drapery upon a skirt of green velvet, and discloses a revers of the richer material among the folds into which it falls at the back.

A faille, in a shade of plumbago, has the loose front of its skirt drapery finely embroidered in seed pearls, with the design accentuated by means of larger specimens.

The width in which this decoration is supplied below the waist is so graduated as to end with a single leaf at the edge of the skirt.

A folded handkerchief of crepe de Chine conveys the impression of a waistcoat being inserted in the close-fitting jacket bodice, which is bordered with pearls, and has a spray of the same on the sleeves and each side of the collar; while the belt, which is carried across the centre of the front, is similarly decorated.

Odds and Ends.

NOVELTIES IN DECORATION.

Window-blinds and curtains occupy the attention of artistic housewives. The white muslin and lace curtains, that have shaded drawing-room windows for so many years, always put up in the same way, and always conscientiously renewed at stated intervals, are now no longer the height of fashion, though they are still seen in houses where the last "new thing" is not seized upon with avidity, and where the mistress is reluctant to espouse novelties which do not please her, and is—may we say?—old-fashioned.

Thin, colored Indian silk curtains, in a pale shade of terra cotta, china-blue, or olive-green (especially the first) are to be seen in drawing-room windows, secured by brass rods, fastened to the woodwork. They are narrow, and sometimes tied in the centre with pretty ribbon or velvet bows.

The upper part of the windows is open to the light, but shaded by the ordinary blinds, or by a deep valance of embroidered linen or muslin, sold on purpose. The fancy India muslin curtains are popular, and so are colored canvas ones and fancy canvas, with broad lines of tapework. If the curtains are attached by rods to the high sash of the window, ordinary curtains split in half are sufficient, and less than half of the length of ordinary ones is required, so that they are economical wear.

I allude principally to the usual French windows, opening in the middle. Of course two curtains to each window are necessary.

Where unsightly objects are to be hidden from view, the fancy muslin curtains, which are quite thick enough, such as the Beypore, and other oriental named ones, in colors, are suitable.

The fancy canvas curtains, which are soft and wide, with different designs running over the surface, can be had in terra-cotta, olive-green, lemon and other shades.

Some string-colored canvas, of quite different make, and much coarser, stiffer ground, have stripes at distances composed of half-inch lines of woven cotton, resembling tape.

Colored silk handkerchiefs of oriental manufacture are much used for keeping back these fancy curtains, orange and light terra-cotta being the favorites.

It is not unfrequent to see a house with these colored handkerchiefs in each window, from attic to basement. In a drawing-room, paper Japanese fans are sometimes pushed into the handkerchief and opened, spreading out against the curtain.

Curtain bands of colored plush, set in gilt mounts like little fans, with a hook and eye to fasten them together behind the curtain, are very fashionable.

Broad sash-ribbon tied in a bow is often seen, and it is not an unknown thing to see black ribbon used when the family are in deep mourning.

Little tables of all shapes and sizes are now scattered over rooms, the newest being the handy little so-called "tuckaways," which fold up flat and are so light that they can be conveniently carried about.

Many amateur artists paint them with enamel paints, or with a floral design on one half of the table. These and others are popular wedding gifts.

Then there are the imitation Morocco or Turkish table stands, intended to support a round Benares brass tray. Anyone who has visited the East will know the kind—standing low, with the legs or supports (there are six or eight) carved in a style resembling balls strung together. These fold together and render the whole thing movable. Sometimes a circular piece of wood is made to fit on instead of the Benares tray, and form the table-top.

The hour-glass table is a revival of a fashion of many years ago, which elderly people would remember, and which was chiefly confined to bedrooms.

It is a table covered with Roman satin, a pretty cretonne or the furniture of the room, nailed around the circular top and base of the wood, and tied in the centre with a broad sash ribbon finished off in a bow.

They are of various sizes, but none exceed the circumference of an ordinary round table. They are higher if they are intended to stand by a bedside, or lower if used as a drawing-room elbow table for holding trifles. The ribbon bow is often of two colors.

The tables can be had now at upholsterers, uncovered or covered, at moderate cost. Carved oaken milking stools are the last fancy in that line, apparently mellowed with time, and solid and antique, as if from some ancestral home.

There is a great feeling for antique treasures now for wedding presents, such as carved oak corner cupboards, cabinets, quaint lights, furniture, etc., and, of course, these are greatly appreciated by most people, especially those with prospective homes.

Bellows are still much in vogue, but they are more used now for dusting china ware than for encouraging desponding fires.

"I SEE we have a cremation society," he observed to the lady on the left. "Yes, I see."—"Do you belong to it?"—"Not yet."—"Doesn't the idea of burning the body of a dead companion strike you with horror?"—"It used to, but I am now quite reconciled."—What has changed your views?" he persisted.—"Marriage!" she briefly answered.

A DEBT of gratitude is too often compromised at about ten cents on the dollar.

Confidential Correspondents.

S. C.—In the process of gilding, a little pure gold goes a great way. The button-makers have got the process down so fine that they can gild a gross of buttons (144) with three cents worth of gold.

JENNIE.—It is usual in writing on subjects like your own, to enclose a stamp or addressed postal card for reply. The matters treated in this column, while particularly applying to individuals, are supposed to be of general interest.

A. S. S.—Shooting-stars are supposed to be small bodies, sometimes meteoric stones, which the earth meets in its annual revolution, and which become visible by passing with planetary velocity through the upper regions of the atmosphere.

ROUGH-HEAD.—Smuggled goods are not thrown overboard when seized, nor is the vessel upon which they are found burnt. The penalty for smuggling usually consists of a fine, which varies, we believe, speaking roughly, with the value of the cargo.

S. C. H.—There is a United States law against printing or using *fac-simile* Greenbacks or National Bank notes. Any one having anything to do with them, is liable to be charged with counterfeiting. We cannot tell you where anything of the kind can be had.

DAISY.—Gum arabic is mixed with the starch, and the cuffs etc., then ironed in a peculiar way. One minute's seeing a person do it, would be better for you than a column's description. 2. Lemon juice and sugar is said to be good. Inquire at any drug-store for special preparations.

P. R.—Many girls marry at eighteen, but we think that is a little too early. A year or two of waiting does no harm, though of course there may be circumstances which make an early marriage desirable. The husband is, after all, only a boy yet; it will do him good if he waits until he reaches twenty-five.

J. D.—In some cases it injures a person's voice to play a wind instrument, and in others it does not. You can only settle the question in your own case by actual experiment. If you find that playing the horn has a tendency to injure your voice, you can of course give it up before serious injury is done.

CANAL.—1. The work of digging the ship canal between Panama and Colon is now vigorously pushed. It is said that even three years ago 11,000 men were engaged on the great ditch. 2. The canal starts at the port of Panama. 3. The actual digging is largely done by Jamaica negroes, who get from 1,25 to 1,75 a day. The climate is very unhealthy.

VIVIAN.—The reason why you are so reserved and shy is because you are far too self-conscious. Instead of pondering what is said by yourself and others, you are thinking about how you shall talk and what effect you will produce by doing so. To learn to talk, go on talking. One leg of mutton, says the proverb, drives down another. The art of conversation is simply the art of being yourself.

ALBERTA.—By sleeping in white kid gloves you may doubtless produce softness and unhealthy pallor of the skin, but the practice is somewhat unusual and rather ridiculous. We should think that a delicate but strong hand, fitted to act as a subtle organ of touch, ought to be an object for your desire. How would an artist or musician fare if he or she wore white kid gloves day and night?

T. W.—If the gentleman said that he had eaten butter which grew on trees, he was just as far from the truth as anyone would be who should say that he had eaten butter which was given by cows. Cows give milk from which butter is made; and certain trees yield seeds that are manufactured into butter. Such trees grow in India and also in Africa. The seeds of their fruit are manufactured, by different processes, into both oil and butter; and from the flowers of some of the trees an intoxicating beverage is distilled.

LUCY W.—We are inclined to answer your serious inquiry with an emphatic negative. A gentleman cannot win a pair of gloves from a lady by kissing her when she is asleep. The only thing he ought to win is her profound contempt for taking her at such a mean disadvantage. Your philosophy of the subject is quite correct. A woman wins a pair of gloves in similar circumstances as some consideration for the favor she has conferred upon a sleeping admirer. In any case, however, such foolish romping strikes us as neither delicate, pretty, nor ladylike.

C. T. A.—Do not burden your little girl with any "fancy" name. There are so many pleasant names, such as Mary, Emily, Jane, and so forth, which have doubtless been borne by the baby's aunts and grandmothers, that it is impossible to find anything better. Gladys has an uncouth sound to our ears, but some unfortunate daughters of peers and baronets bear even more ridiculous names, such as Edmundina, Vanda, Edrica, Gwladys, Milburga, Edwyna, Churfrida, Walburga, Thomasine, Rhona, Albinia, Gundrede. If you wish to nickname your baby you can take your choice of these aristocratic wordities.

JESS.—The Spenserian stanza consists of eight lines of heroic and a final one of Alexandrine: the first and third lines, the second and fourth, fifth and seventh, sixth and eighth, rhymes respectively, while the ninth has the same rhyme as the eighth. Here is a specimen from Spenser himself:

By this the northern wagoner had set
His sevenfold team behind the steadfast star,
That was in ocean waves yet never met,
But firm is fixed and sendeth light from far
To all that in the wide deep wandering are;
And cheerful chanticleer, with his note shrill,
Had warned once that Phœbus' fiery car
In haste was climbing up the eastern hill
Full envious that night so long his room did fill.

STUDENT.—We have nothing better than tradition to go on, but the generally accepted version is: Matthew suffered martyrdom, or was slain in the city of Ethiopia. Mark was dragged through the streets of Alexandria, in Egypt, till he expired. Luke was hanged to an olive tree in Greece. John was put in a boiling cauldron at Rome, but escaped death; he died a natural death in Ephesus, in Asia. James the Great was beheaded in Jerusalem. James the Less was thrown from a pinnacle, and beaten to death. Philip was beheaded. Bartholomew was skinned alive. Andrew was crucified, and pounded while dying. Thomas was run through with a lance. Jude was shot through with arrows, and Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards.